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North of Norwottuck



Aerial map of So. Amherst, 9/29/80, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

[Road leading east across lower third of map leads to town well].

(Black lines enclose approximate acreage of Hampshire College in 1968, (in Amherst), 550 acres; now 800 acres. College founded in 1965; opened 1970. Faculty - 96; students - 1,200. BA degree).

North of Norwottuck

A Sampler of South Amherst, Mass.

– that we may know something
of the background of old South
Amherst and so preserve some of
it today –

Marjorie Atkins Elliott
Feb. 1984

Published by
F. Irvine and Marjorie Elliott
4005 Monona Drive
Madison, Wis.
53716

1985

TO MY HUSBAND
Without Whose Help
There Would Have Been No Book

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Corrections and Clarifications in NORTH OF NORWOTTUCK

Page vii - Aerial map of So. Amherst in 1980 is on p. ii, not p. xii.

Page 14 - Homer Cowles tore down the Schoonmaker barn using the lumber for roof over two "trench silos" in early 1950's. Old barns are scarce. The Lyman Thomson (now Ned Markert's) has a 46 ft. length beam. Very few barns joined with wooden-pegs are left. Such barns were movable. Phil Ives' barn was moved six times.

Page 26 - Caption wrong. Gas station located at West Street and Pomeroy Lane, built by Mobil Oil in 1924, according to Chauncy Simmons. It cost $800.00 and was on a site 150 x 100 feet. (Stiles had another building used by Hampshire College).

Page 26 - Caption wrong. Wedding party in 1974 included driver Bob Collins, Nancy Grimm in front; rear passenger facing front, Nancy Cowles: girl facing Nancy, Patty Gay -- all bridesmaids. Susan Cowles, bride of Donald Crutch, was not in this car load.

Page 30 - Chauncy Simmons, here age 22, did not operate the gas station while the trolley was in existence, but rode with other students.

Page 53 - Tonteen mispelled; Tontine is correct. Change Mrs. Emeline Wright Elmer to Mrs. Emeline Elmer Wright. Henry Thayer sold the house to Mrs. Wright. Grandfather Asahel bought it from Mrs. Wright. Father Dwight sold it to the Tatros. Alan Torrey should be Allen Torrey. Add: Lawrence Elys live there now.

Page 59 - Upper picture by Karen Waggoner. Barn was originally one story; it has now fallen down. It was owned by Mr. Gray, then Reuben Pomeroy, Jim Schoonmaker, and Mannheim's.

Page 60 - Caption wrong. Mr. & Mrs. Charles Puffer, great uncle and aunt of Steven Puffer, in front of their property, west side of West Street, between Hastings' and Thorpes', 1894. Buildings gone - possibly fire.

Page 62 - Dwight sisters' house located beyond Fawkner house and barn, up Shays Street.

Page 64 - E.A. Wentworth, son of E.H. Wentworth, standing beside the milk delivery wagin he used on his milk route 1905 to 1908. His dairy farm, then on Stanley Street, was called "Fair View". Today, James Wentworth, who was grandson of E.H. Wentworth, operates "Fair Acres" at 796 South East Street.

Page 65 - Correction: The Rock barn did not burn, but is badly deteriorated today. Also, the passerby rescued the twins, Bertha and Catherine but in the smoke failed to see the baby, Andrew, in the crib. Mr. Rock was at the brickyard; Mrs. Rock was in the garden. The community rallied with furniture, clothing, and grocery supplies for a year, delivered by Charles King. Harold Main, a mason, rebuilt the basement rooms. This was neighborhood concern.

Page 69 - Frances Wentworth was a full-time employee for many years.

Page 74 - Four towns - Prescott, Greenwich, Dana, and Enfield were cleared of occupants in 1938. The water filled the reservoir behind Windsor Dam by 1946.

Page 92 - Dr. Nelson, not Norman Haskell.

Page 101 - Bear Mountain is sometimes spelled Bare Mountain. Rattlesnake mountain lies just east of Mr. Norwottuck. The two Tinker Hills are old volcanic cones.

Page 102 - Caption wrong. Stiles' small fruit stand was not the building in lower left corner of picture. A later Stiles building was moved across the road to this place to become a Security Office and then a Personnel Office for Hampshire College.

Page 107 - Revision of aerial caption beginning 5th line from bottom, left column. The second house east from the crossroad on Bay Road was Ebenezer Nutting's, brother of Levi and Truman. This house was acquired by Edward C. Bolter (son of Ziba Bolter), who was father of Leon Bolter. (Leon's letter is on page 108.) Reference to Coelen's is incorrect here. (See page 110). Beginning fifth line from bottom, right column: Edwin A. Bolter lived in the house directly across from King's on Mechanic Street. (This house is now owned by the Garrabrandt's).

Page 108 - Insert in top caption: "...outing resort or Towne house..."

Page 108 - Bottom picture. Mary Thayer Wheelock's house, according to her, was never remodeled from a distillery. It was always called the Henry Bishop homestead.

Page 109 - Footnote 5. See Mr. Losey's house on 1873 map.

Page 109 - Top picture. Kate Wheelock later lived in this corner house of Levi's.

Page 110 - Bottom left picture. Mr. & Mrs. Horace Grosvenor moved from 734 Bay Road to 737 Bay Road, across the street when their son, Raymond, was killed in an accident in the 1940's.

Page 110 - Bottom right picture. First three lines wrong. House is called Grosvenor House.

Page 131 - Second and third line of a table blessing asked by W.H. Atkins should read: "May we ever have grateful hearts for these Thy gifts. Amen".

Page 133 - Myra and Fred Morehouse moved to N. Prospect from Shays St. in 1896.

Page 135 - A pun of Rev. Gleason's should read: "Try to be here in time to see the late Stiles". The Stiles were often late, so much so that one of Stuart's brothers took the trolley part way and walked the rest of the way.

Page 137 - Top picture, right column. Caption, fifth line down, should read: FRONT row, not BACK.

Page 137 - Caption wrong. House is Darwin Owen's, uncle of Roger Owen, husband of Alice Wentworth, now Miner Tuttle's.

Page 139 - Merrick's woods were probably located in Lawrence Swamp, according to Mary Wheelock and Homer Cowles.

Page 169 - Caption wrong: Corrected: Richard, Ernest, Walter, Edward, Herman (Sonny), Carl, and Ruth Markert.

Page 178: Caption wrong. The house belongs to Philip Torrey, not Allen, 1450 South East Street.

Page 191 - Caption wrong. Doris Cowles was an army nurse, not a WAVE.

Page 194 - Left column, second paragraph. Mrs. Hallis should be Mrs. Hollis Moore.

Page 199 - Caption wrong: Stavros Foundation, not Starvos.

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SOUTH AMHERST
MASSACHUSETTS
According to 1950 Street List
Scale 1"=800'
HLMc 9/72
N
LAWRENCE SWAMP
MT. NOLTON RANGE
MT. POLUX
MT. CASTOR
Old Brickyard Site
Boston and Maine R. R.
Central Vermont R. R.
Fort River
KELL VALLEY
KELL LAKE
WEST POMEROY LAKE
POMEROY LAKE
POTWINE LAKE
MOP ROAD
BAY ROAD
EAST PROCK
BABY CARRIAGE BROOK
Street Railway (Discontinued)
Trolley Waiting Station
Gas Sta.
Cold Storage
Fruit Stand
Old Blacksmith Shop
Old Methodist Church
Approx. Site of Baby Carriage Factory
South Amherst School
Munson Mem. Library
South Congregational Church
Parsonage
Chaffe (Former Poor Farm)
STATION
Merrell Farm
Cellar Hole
Thompson
Stoughton
Wentworth
Tenney
Loeke
Horne
Hall
Sherman
Main
Chas. Hiram Thayer
Fabius
Rok
Detour
Thompson
Gowdy
Howett
Hemartonis
Hookwahl
Togue
O'Keefe
Baird
Hannigan
Hanley
Harvey
Frasse
Van Schoonhoven
Page
Low
Heath
Crocker
Edward Miller
Day
Smith
Mathiesen
Russell
O'Brien
Grula
Charlotte Harvey
Moore
William
Hemartonis
Leslie
Mitchell (Saith)
Campbell
Taylor
Norman Herbert
Esther
Swan
Gotlieb Bresse
Whitcomb
Wemsyk
Hendrick
Hassan
Leahmy
A Phillips Stedman
Kwolaski
Robert
Thorpe
March
Shaw
Cole
Aldrich
Montague
Allan
Ralph Hayward
Walter Hayward
Stiles
Fillmore
Hunter
Kwolaski
Eisolowski
Gaspar
Burk
Miles
Jack
Boyle
Baker
Ring
Greenwood
Kentfield
Mosakiewicz
Aitele
Lyman
Keefe
Grey
Joseph
Sloby
Kenneth Thayer
Colby
Roberts
Sanders
Raymond
Albert Pease
Pearl Thayer
Switzer
MacLeod
Gowan
King
Erickson
Win. Shumway
Holt
Cowles
Wil. Shumway
Northorne
Clifford Shumway
Truman Smith
Sieling (Robert Schoonmaker)
W.C. Atkins
Walters (Tiffany)
Charles Miller
W. H. Atkins
Vondell (Tiffany)
Berglund (Wentworth)
Schoonmaker
Herbert C. Hutchinson
Reymond Wentworth
Cenning Plant
L. Tiffany
J. Atlas
C. Simmons
Tiffany
Judkins
M. Atkins
Costa
A Cook
William Kerahlis
McKenzie
Tufts
Thayer, Dwight
Cook
Morse
Stanley
Allard
Hayes
Poor
Boston
Collins
Gowan
Day
Smith
Russell
Mathiesen
Thompson
Linton
Helen Stedman
Adams
Poor
Boston
Collins
Switzer
Judkins
M. Atkins
Costa
A Cook
William Kerahlis
McKenzie
Tufts
Thayer, Dwight
Cook
Morse
Stanley
Allard
Hayes
Eldridge
Richards
Hutchings
Boyle
Smith
Russell
Poor
Boston
Collins
Mitchell (Smith)
Leslie
Gas Sta.
Cold Storage
Trolley Waiting Station
Campbell
Taylor
Esther
Swan
Gotlieb Bresse
Whitcomb
Wemsyk
Hendrick
Hassan
Leahmy
A Phillips Stedman
Kwolaski
Robert
Thorpe
March
Shaw
Cole
Aldrich
Montague
Allan
Ralph Hayward
Walter Hayward
Stiles
Fillmore
Hunter
Kwolaski
Eisolowski
Gaspar
Burk
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Grey
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Schoonmaker
Herbert C. Hutchinson
Reymond Wentworth
Cenning Plant
L. Tiffany
J. Atlas
C. Simmons
Tiffany

Preface

LEAVE THE LIGHT BURNING and now NORTH OF NORWOTTUCK are the family scrapbooks of this special community we call South Amherst. Our sense of place, love for each other, and traditions are passed on here like those passed from generation to generation in our private families. Although the outward appearance of the community changes constantly, now at an alarming speed, the inner light we share need not go out.

Because the reader of Book II may not have access to the first book, the writer wishes to quote most of the Preface to Book I as written by Philip T. Ives in 1972. His is an accurate overview of the apparent changes in our community, and only a few words need to be added parenthetically.

"South Amherst was (until about 1950) a small, relatively stable agricultural community of less than 200 families spread over a third of the town. It had not been changed earlier by the coming of several Irish families at the time of the potato famine in Erin, nor by the influx of many peasant families from Poland during World War I. . . .

"The community economy remained chiefly agricultural. A new family generally replaced another and the 'place' retained the name of the previous family for identification in village talk. When a new house and barn were built, it became the 'new place' of the neighborhood for a decade or more, though it never seemed to command the respect given to the older places. Nor did new people.

"Before 1950, everybody knew everyone, and everything about everyone. This common knowledge, together with the difficult struggle to wrest a living from the earth, created a deep, mutual concern among the villagers. William Atkins was a leader in this spirit of concern.

"Whenever help was needed, everyone pitched in whether it was the next farm or someone three miles away, your best friend or someone you only tolerated. It was the only form of accident, fire and health insurance. But concern was rooted in more than survival — it was an expression of the spirit and sense of community characteristic of small New England villages.

"As late as the 1950's, South Amherst already had become much more residential than agricultural. . . .

"Small-farm agriculture became a losing proposition in South Amherst in the 1920's, and '30's. When winterized road and automobiles opened up the area to people whose work was in neighboring cities, when the 1931 change from "Aggie" to "Massachusetts State" doubled the number of families with that institution, many farms were sold and their houses became the residences of non-farmers. This change in population structure accelerated in the 1940's, when 'U Mass' was established in Amherst. A new phase, housing developments, began as the University expanded quickly after World War II. . . .

"South Amherst went from rural-agricultural in the 1920's, to rural-residential in the 1940's. Then its growth was entirely suburban. Today urbanism is making spot appearances. . . .

"The most significant change in the last 40 years is in the human population. A family used to move in to live out its life as farmers, and became an integral part of the community. Today in the development of Orchard Valley, on the Markert place, an old-timer is someone who stays more than three years. There and in other developments, some families do not wish to become part of any community. They are urban, not rural.

"Many new South Amherst families are community-minded, but they represent several different groups, each striving for identity in one geographical area. The South Congregational Church, the only one facing the Common, was the natural and chief center of all South Amherst activities. . . ."

This church is still physically and spiritually at the heart of the South Amherst community. It remains a special gathering place and a visual reminder of our less tangible connections.

The pace of change has accelerated. It sometimes seems that the village has been overcome by Amherst's rampant educational institutions, rapid population growth, and uncontrollable economic factors. "So many came so fast, speaking with such different voices — that was the tragedy that befell South Amherst." Even so, "old" South Amherst is here and can be found by those who know it is a treasure well worth seeking.

William H. Atkins passed the light to his children and others of their generation. His daughter, Marjorie Atkins Elliott, has provided with the two books a good supply of fuel for the lamp which the present generation will keep trimmed in order to "leave the light burning" for the next generation "north of Norwottuck."

Sheila Rainford



Mt. Pollux
Potwine Lane intersection with So. East Street.
1984

Aerial photo by Charles V. Thayer



South Amherst Business Notices

Carriage Maker

Robinson A. J..Manufr of Children's Carriages, Gigs, Perambulators, Toy Cabs, Carts, &c., So Amherst

Dry Goods and Groceries

Dickinson W..Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, &c., So. Amherst

Miscellaneous

Allen B B..Farmer.
Barton H.. "
Bishop H.. "
Bolter E. G.. "
Barrett A. C.. "
Bridgeman B.. "
Chase A.. "
Curtis O.. "
Cushman M.. "
Coy E.. "
Dickinson W A.. "
Dickinson C.. "
Dickinson C M.. "
Damon J T.. "
Edwards S "
Goodhill S.. "
Hastings C.. "
Johnson W.. "
Lyman W.. "
Merrick T. P.. "
Merrick J. E.. "

1873 Map of Amherst (sent by Homer Cowles)

Letter from Lena Mory to Marjorie Elliott, 1/16/73.)

In 1942 we had a sectional building moved from the woods on the hill back of Wheelock's orchard, where we had squatted for several years, and placed permanently below the old cellar hole on Middle Street. Pond referred to is Needham Pond, up Middle Street from Bay Road, on left side.. . .

My husband, Austin Mory, and I bought a farm of about twenty acres, including a couple of cellar holes and much brush from Ted Critchett in 1940.

The old mill and pond sites, (where children's wagons were manufactured in the 19th century), around three acres, we bought from Mrs. James Merrick a little earlier.

The dam and bricks and pieces of machinery from the mill were there, but as there were quite large trees growing within the pond area the dam must have broken out quite a few years before that time. Apparently that occurred frequently as Mary Pomeroy told me that when water came "swooshing" down the brook back of their house (Pomeroy Lane) they knew the dam had broken out again. Mary Wheelock remembers when the pond was there.

Our present home was built in 1965.

About the Editor



Marjorie Atkins Elliott
Monona, Wisconsin 1985

From the days of that brave "soldier of the King" who gave the town its name, Amherst, consciously and unconsciously, has gone about its business gathering enough notables, scandals, poets, old houses, and colleges to make itself a significant, often tantalizing, history. Lately, as we know, various capable scholars, writers, fact-gatherers have written essays and books to give that history "a local habitation and a name" (as well as some national renown) whether it be old landmarks torn down, the no-longer-secret life of Austin and Mabel, or "The Trees of Amherst". Amherst has made history by putting up the UN flag, declaring itself a nuclear-free zone. It has given nourishment to Emily, Robert Frost, and Henry Steele Commager.

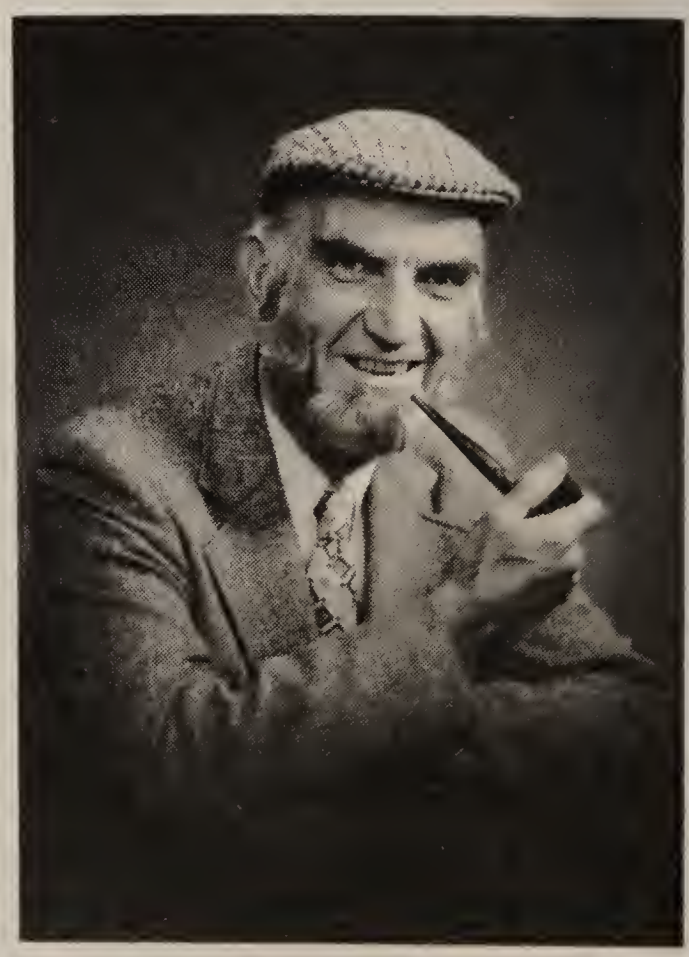
Insiders and outsiders have written of Amherst. Marjorie Atkins Elliott is both insider and outsider. Over the years and often from a 1,000 miles away in Wisconsin, she has written Letters to the Editor (of whichever Amherst newspaper was being published) to protest the proposed tearing down of an old building, to urge the setting aside of woodland for a sanctuary, to remind Amherst folk of their amazing heritage. Yet it is as a chronicler of South Amherst that Mrs. Elliott writes most often, for in South Amherst she is an "insider". South Amherst is home. South Amherst is where her heart is.

She is fervently drawn to the memories of a happy childhood, so that she speaks with knowledge and affection of the rambling farmhouse, barns, and shed, fragrant hayfields, the apple harvest, summer thunderstorms shaking the house, the changing seasons. Even more she has carried into a life lived many miles away from New England a sensitivity of the meaning of neighborhood. Hers is a constant thanksgiving for her parents and the farms down the road that made South Amherst a place for children to "grow up" in safety and with character. She loves old houses mainly because they were, first of all, homes where South Amherst folk brought up families, and contributed to the shared life of the neighborhood found in South Congregational Church, at the 4th of July Picnic, around the Christmas Tree on Fiddlers Green, or in bringing soup to a sick child next door. Out of her sensitivity to these happy recollections emerges a constant admiration for those virtues of honesty, endurance, and trust which, though flourishing in a time less harried than our own, can still strengthen us as we battle for meaning in a jungle of computers, nuclear warfare, and competitive greed.

I am taken also by Marjorie Elliott's gifts as an observer. Somehow she summons up images of what South Amherst must have been like 100 or more years ago — a village of spacious silences, without grinding trucks, planes overhead, police car sirens, buzz saws, where one could hear across the silence the sound of children's voices, the clang of the blacksmith's hammer on the anvil, a farmer shouting across the fields, bird songs, and the hum of locusts in the trees. Or writing of Fall coming on, she has an eye for detail that reveals how faithfully she reads her experience of an autumn morning: ". . .the cobweb, invisibly strung the evening before across your path, brushing your face as you pick up the morning newspaper . . . The drift of white snake root . . . of deep purple asters and the last goldenrod in the swamp. The odor of purple grapes as you pass the vine."

Most of all, Marjorie Elliott is gratefully aware of those people in her childhood whose warmth toward life, capacity to survive, hospitality to the stranger and sojourner in their midst, compassion for them that were in trouble, gave her what Saint Paul calls "an upward calling". Out in Wisconsin they spoke of her as being "the area's conscience". We in South Amherst can thank her for moving local history beyond nostalgia; through her love affair with old landmarks, her interest in the early industries of South Amherst, her sadness at the passing of the dairy farms, her gathering up of samples written by our local writers, she conveys her sense of the timeless in things that pass away. Marjorie Atkins Elliott is a very contemporary person. She simply urges us to let our history continue to teach us how to live.

Arnold Kenseth



Dr. F.I. Elliott
Monona, Wisconsin 1974

Acknowledgements

Anyone who attempts to write a history is indebted to those before who recorded events, but also to those who share their recollections and pictures with the author today. "Their name is legion." A few given here are Sue Schneider, who cheerfully typed; Sheila Rainford of So. Amherst, who promptly answered my call for help; and especially my husband, who worked at my side from last summer. Mrs. Ruth Shaft of Faribault, Minn., gave me the book John Nutting of So. Amherst, by her father, son of Elija Nutting, emigrant from So.Amherst. Chas. V. Thayer — pictures, aerial photos, data of Jessie Vallentine Thayer (the poet whom Bob Francis knew); and Richard Thayer, help in Hockanum. To all who sent pictures of soldiers of WW II; to Paul Thorpe, H. Parker de Bruyn, S. Stiles, C. Markert for letters on West St., my thanks. In Madison and Amherst, librarians were most considerate. Finally, a special gratitude for those who prepared specific articles.



A candid shot by Irvine of the author/editor and helper-typist Sue Schneider, (on right), as they worked one morning in July checking pictures of soldiers which would be used in North of Norwottock. (Elliott)

End of an Era

1900 — 1950

"CHICKEN FEVER" IN SOUTH AMHERST
Excerpts from a tape made in 1985 by
Jack W. Schoonmaker, retired, formerly of
So. Amherst, now of Logan, Utah
Edited by Marjorie Elliott

In the South Amherst of 1920, a common sight on South East Street was a farm house and barn, and a flock of hens (with a rooster) outdoors near a small hen house. Setting hens kept hatching eggs warm. In three weeks the mother hen would be outdoors with her circlet of baby chicks. This scene would change. A contagious interest in raising chickens would spring up due to the enterprise of a former schoolteacher, Robert S. Schoonmaker. He would introduce modern methods and revolutionize the chicken industry, not only in South Amherst but throughout New England and beyond as success proved large scale hatching was practicable. Through the efforts of his son, the breeding of a superior all-purpose fowl was also fostered.

Jack recalls, "When the family moved to Amherst, in 1919, here stood two buildings behind our house to the southwest, naybe 200 feet away. One was a large building which we call-d a granary, where grain could be stored and corn could be helled. (We did shell corn there.) There was also what we alled the "long house" which was a building about 20 feet eep, built in four sections, each about 24 feet long. It accom-nodated itself to the slope of the hill (Mt. Pollux) for at each 4 feet the floor dropped down about a foot and a half; this nade four levels. This "long house" had been built specifically or poultry and was used in turn by dad for the same purpose. A friend provided dad with his first poultry — white leghorns ut dad soon changed to the Rhode Island Red, a more opular breed in New England. Later he got most of his stock rom Parmenter of Massachusetts.



The Schoonmaker granary today. (picture by Dan Collins)



David Hawthorne's little flock of hens (white rocks?) cir 1910.

(Marian Hawthorne Lyman)

"As I look back, I don't recall that there was any large poultry operation in South Amherst. It was common for people to have six to 20 hens to produce eggs for their table. A number had more than home flocks (several hundred hens), and sold eggs and live broilers to area markets. I remember people like Paul Wheelock, Fred Judd, Walter Hayward, the Gotlieb Braces, the Louis Miazgas, Will Sanderson, Frank Ives, and others. Stuart Stiles writes, "Bob, my brother, used to have chicks, hens and broilers and would sell the eggs to the people in Holyoke, and later at Mt. Holyoke College and Smith. I would help him cut up chickens after we dressed them as late as 1938." At one time someone must have had a large flock where our family settled because of the existing "long house" I have already described.

"I remember when dad decided to hatch a few chickens. He took some orange crates, made in those days out of wood hens, got some eggs and proceeded to hatch chicks in our basement.

"Dad next purchased an oil type incubator, single tray, that probably hatched 75 to 100 chicks at a time out of 125 eggs. Soon he had half a dozen of these oil type incubators. I remember helping trim lamp wicks twice a day to maintain the heat. Dad was soon in the business of supplying chicks for a few neighbors and friends, who also supplied him with additional eggs. He decided to expand further.

"More space was needed. But where was it? The cellar was renovated for sorting and testing fertile eggs. Even most of the garage was in use as the incubator room. Why not adapt the old hay barn? Originally, we had had two cows but we were buying our own milk now. Once we had had four horses in our barn across the street but we were now using a truck and a 1928 Buick. As a result we did little haying. (Many times I had helped put hay in the mows above the scaffolds over the



The R. S. Schoonmaker barn, once a hay barn, converted into a large "hen house" to provide for an expanding poultry business. (Jack Schoonmaker)

animals. The hay provided both feed and insulation from the winter cold.) So dad led the way in 1930 remodeling our old barn for hens. Other poultry men like Brainard Lyman, Bill Atkins on his farm, E.G. Brown, West Street, and Bill Davenport at the Green converted their barns also for poultry use. This involved adding floors, windows and automatically timed electric lights to promote longer laying. (Ben Judd converted his tobacco barn strictly for producing table eggs.) See picture page 17.

"These barns were never the best; they were difficult to maintain and cold in the winter. They were a very effective stopgap although pipes would freeze in the frigid weather.

"In the early days we had to carry buckets of water to the hens out in the barn. In winter we carried hot water from the house to add to the drinking water because the drinking water would freeze. Eventually, a company developed a no-freeze automatic waterer. — I sold these for a number of years to other poultrymen. We protected the lines feeding these automatics with soilheating cable.

"Three other men had large independent units — "Gramps" Cook (just below dad's farm on South East Street) had a commercial outlet, Bill Davenport, at the Green, and E.G. Brown, West Street, also sold chicks from good breeding stock to poultrymen in the Valley. Our prime outlet for baby chicks was in the county.

"I believe that at the time of the World's Poultry Congress in Ottawa, Canada, in 1927, dad and mother became acquainted with the Petersimes of Ohio who manufactured the first mammoth electric type incubator. It could take 2,000 eggs hatching 500 chicks at a time. Dad bought a small one first and used it with his oil heated incubators. Then around 1930 he bought a large one, and put it into the garage. I remember the other poultrymen of the state thought little of his judgement. They said in effect, 'Just you wait until the electric juice goes off the first time and you'll really be hurting.' Well, he did have a couple of close calls but our electric service was remarkably reliable and short electric interruptions did not seem to have that great an effect. Dad sold many of these mammoth incubators for Petersime Incubator Company throughout New England and some to those who had laughed at him when he purchased his first one."

At this point, Ann, Jack's wife, gives two recollections of times when the electricity went off and how they managed. She writes, "After the 1938 hurricane, electricity was off for two weeks; the phones for a month. We went over to Far View Farm where the hatching was taking place at that time, and helped dad put eggs from the incubators into cases, cover them with blankets and take them up to the college (Mass. State). They had their own electrical plant so were not hampered by all the trees which had fallen on power lines. As I recall, dad got a pretty good hatch from the eggs thus transferred.

"The other occasion, which your dad referred to in Leave the Light Burning, was the severe wind storm of November 1950. He wrote:

> 'John Schoonmaker, being caught Saturday p.m. without electricity, moved 4,500 eggs in the process of hatching, 3 miles to E. G. Brown's incubator on West Street and another 5,000 partly incubated. It was really a scientific job to move this lot of eggs without chilling or breakage this distance. Mr. Schoonmaker does not expect a severe loss from the transfer.'



Lyman's barn converted into a hen house during the "chicken fever" days of 1920-40. The barn still stands in 1984. (Brainard Lyman)



Barbara Tiffany removing baby chickens from the Schoonmaker incubator. (Barbara Tiffany)

"I recall Mr. Brown had not lost his power nor was he hatching at that time. The power was off for a couple of days or so. But this event encouraged us to think of getting a unit to make our own power.

"Your brother Bill called Jack and told him Ray Mead was there and had some information about getting a unit. Jack found from Ray that there were war surplus units available, and went with a friend to some place in Connecticut to check it out. The upshot was that Jack took a truck, picked up a unit and took it to an electric company in Springfield to have it changed to fit our use.

"After a couple of weeks we got the unit, and installed it in our cellar. We waited for a double/throw switch from Westinghouse. Then Jack heard on the radio, one day in late December, of rain and sleet predicted. A Mr. Waterhouse told him the switch had not come but he would see what he could rig up. He had two old switch boxes from the old hat factory which he brought. They installed those, using only one set of fuses (which could be transferred from one box to the other, depending on whether we were to be on town power or our own) . . . I don't think it was two hours after they had finished when the storm started up. Sure enough. Lines were down and it stayed cold enough to keep ice forming on the wires. We had a number of friends who saw the lights go off through the area and rejoiced with us as they saw the light at our place. It was off 72 hours, and the generator worked all that time."

This 1950 event told by Ann came after a 1943 disaster for the young family and business which Jack omitted from his account of the change in poultry care and breeding. (Her report tells us something about the way this family could interpret hardship.) She writes, "We have a 'funny' story. One early morning in December, 1943, we were awakened by some stones being thrown against our second floor bedroom window. There was a rosy glow on the walls of the room and looking out we saw that the roof of the 'New House' where we raised our chicks was ablaze. Apparently someone coming home from defense work had seen the fire and came to warn us. Jack jumped out of bed and put on his pants. I followed with his shoes as he rushed out to the other end of the building to see if he could save some of the birds housed there — grown pullets and cockerels — some of our breeding stock. He never was able to get the key in the lock and we found the birds must have suffocated as they never moved from the roosts. I called the fire department which was slow in coming. They said best let the building burn and have less to clean up. We had our insurance with W.R. Brown whom you may remember. I called to notify him of the fire, saying, 'Mr. Brown, our big chicken house just burned down.' In his abrupt way he said, 'Thank you' and hung up. No word of comfort or help; he just thanked me for the notification. (Maybe this isn't 'funny' but we often chuckle over it.)"



The John Schoonmaker house, 512 Bay Rd., that heard stage coaches rumble by, was gutted by a TV-started fire in 1978. Successive owners, Andrew Miazga, E. L. Roberts, Chas. Meakim, largely rebuilt it. The present owner, John Fogarty, purchased the house in 1984, and has finished it.

Jack goes on. "Feed for the chickens in the mid-twenties was bought from Charles King's store — bran, middlings, cottonseed meal, bone meal, meat scraps, fish meal. Dad probably mixed it with a formula from the college. Soybean meal came later . . . We got some Wirthmore feed from Mr. Howlett and successors; in the 1930's Eastern States grain was handled by your brother, Howard, at Boston and Maine, and some from Farm Bureau.

"I can remember as a child riding in the wagon with dad carrying our own home grown grain up to Mill Valley to the old Grist Mill where the miller ground it for us. We sometimes purchased some other product which another farmer may have left in exchange for work done for him by the miller.

"Eventually as knowledge of nutrition increased, the feed intake of a hen was decreased from four to five pounds to two pounds to produce one pound of (chicken) meat.

"Preparation of hens for market changed like everything else. In the old days we used to go out and get a hen and cut off its head, dump it into a pail of hot water and strip the feathers off. In time, as chickens were produced for market a machine with rubber fingers was developed that did the work. (We never sold dressed chickens or had one of those machines, but did sell live chicks to buyers.)

"When I grew up and went away to college I kept my interest in poultry. Eventually my wife Ann and I, (married in 1937), raised all stock on Bay Road at our own farm. Dad kept the grown hens and hatchery at Far View Farms. Neighbor-poultrymen continued to supply hatching eggs. At length we had the whole hatchery operation and increased responsibility for breeding stock. We decided to specialize in breeding, developing a favorite strain of White Plymouth Rock as base stock to be sold to others. This meant record keeping on genetic traits of individual families, number of eggs produced, hatchability. Ann did much of this and cared for our five children as well.



*Boston and Maine railroad siding off Pleasant St., Amherst, where farmers purchased their grain. Schoonmaker obtained grain here from H. W. Atkins, agent for Eastern States Farmers Exchange, (later Agway), from 1940 to 1970. A tale is told of a boxcar that got away. It seems it was pushed, as usual, up on the siding at So. Pleasant St. The push was too forceful; the boxcar took off, gaining momentum down the hill toward the sharp right turn at the foot by Mill Valley bridge. Horrified, the railroad men could do nothing. Miraculously the boxcar did not tip over and made the turn safely. (**Amherst Record Journal** 4/20/74)*

"We entered the 'Chicken of Tomorrow' contest at state and national levels. (Al Brace, our foreman, had fostered our interest by winning a first prize in a 1948 Massachusetts contest.) We bred for maximum egg production, meat quality, configuration, growth, etc., and won honors up and down the Eastern coast. In 1951 we were one of 40 breeders nationwide in the contest. All entry eggs, one case each, were hatched in a common incubator at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Chicks were fed identical feed and three months later evaluated. We won fifth place.

"Ann and I were making plans to move our family of five children to Utah and transfer our breeding stock which we did in 1952. Sale was expected for the home plant which we had left under the management of Herb Hutchings, Jr. with the capable business help of Betty Sonderegger and of Barbie Tiffany who had come to us originally when we took over the hatchery from my dad for whom she had worked for a number of years. But it did not sell. Frankly most people were a little bit dubious about the idea of taking over a business after an owner had 'walked out on it.' So, I sold what I could and shipped the rest by railroad to our set-up in Utah, where we continued the business successfully until other changes intervened in the 1960's.

"This concludes my personal recollection of the agricultural revolution, 'the chicken fever,' that took hold in South Amherst from 1920 to 1952."

Editor's footnote: As I, a neighbor, look back on the chicken operation at Schoonmaker's, I remember how Mrs. Schoonmaker dovetailed the hatching of eggs into her responsibilities as mother and homemaker. I recall her immense laundries hanging on the line, at her operating the only ironing mangle I had seen, with a smile of contentment, baking bread — 18 loaves a week, loading the car with chickens peeping out of their cardboard cartons, and four of us children bound for uptwon for our weekly music lessons. Yet she had time to take us swimming, to join in a baseball game north of the house, and to play in the orchestra that met in the Schoonmaker living room.

"She saw to it that the children did their jobs in this home-based industry through all its stages, such as shutting up the young poultry at evening lest they perch overnight in the trees. Two or three of the boys would take turns sleeping in a small prefab brooder house at Far View or down at Jack's later. Church and its events were our social as well as religious training ground. We could walk, in those days, anywhere in the area, at any hour, in safety.

If Jack were asked, I think he would say, "The chicken industry gave valid work to us six children as we grew up. (Ruth, the 7th, came too late for the hey-day of it.) South Amherst was a suitable location and pioneering in poultry a satisfying vocation for my dad who had left teaching because of severe eye strain. Amherst set among colleges was a stimulus; the town gave dad civic duties. We had a country life in the best of villages, a fine grade school and church nearby, our two farms located but two miles apart. With the retirement of my folks to Florida and my own family's move to Utah, Schoonmaker participation in the South Amherst chicken industry ended. But the tide had peaked there."

So the old hay barns built originally for horses and cows, emptied now of hens, were gradually torn down, the barn sites sold as building lots for a burgeoning college-related population. The Norwottuck valley of South Amherst would continue to call newcomers but they will never hear the roosters crowing or the whinny of a farm team as Jack's generation did. It is good to have had this era recalled by one who carried on his father's pioneer work in the field, — lest we forget.

Footnote:

During the Depression in the 1930's, flour, sugar and feed in 50 lb. and 100 lb. wt. were obtainable made in an attractive reusable floral print. Homemakers were soon pulling the thread that opened the bags to the full width, and making cotton dish towels, sleeveless dresses, curtains, almost anything suitable out of the purchased bags. You could buy sugar, chicken feed, cow feed in these bags and eliminate the cost of purchased cotton cloth. See page 45.



"Thought you might like a photo of me in an outfit from a grain bag of the 1930's. My grandmother was a tailor and made all of my casual clothes from grain bags. She also made aprons, curtains, tablecloths, napkins and other things from them. It was a treat to go to pick up the grain and get to choose the pattern on the fabric. The prettiest prints seemed to be on bags of mash, a very fine corn meal we fed to our chickens. The photo of me in my 'grain bag dress' was taken in 1950 when I got my first horse. I named her 'Honey Bunch' after the heroine of the series of books I was reading." (Sheila Rainford)



Before poultry was big business, the 1901 Atkins barn and barnyard, with three small hen houses, and the Plymouth Rock hens running free. (Miller/McChesney family)



The former Ben Judd tobacco barn, 1427 So. E. St., bought by Howard Atkins in the chicken era. It was converted into housing for chickens to supplement room in three Judd built hen houses, rented earlier by Bill Atkins, one of Jack's egg suppliers. The two aged Judd sisters lived on at their house — with Bill, Howard or Cliff Tiffany taking care of their wood supply, snowplowing, etc., as long as the sisters lived. Upon Cliff's death in 1964, Howard gave up the egg business. The large barn was then remodeled for apple pickers flown in from Puerto Rica and Jamaica; the rest of the building boarded off for storage. The house with ell apartment is today owned by Mrs. Edwards. (Everett Dimock)

Everett Dimock in 1985 said that although the chicken business did die out in the 1950's in South Amherst — Carl Markert for one selling out his flocks in 1959 — and the dairy soon after, the industry flourishes in Connecticut, Maine and the South. Recently over 100 degree weather in May 1985 suffocated thousands of poultry in Alabama so climate can work both ways.

Glenn Shaw of Gulf Road, Pelham, closed down his turkey farm in 1984, a business he had run for scores of years, saying, "Automated industry has replaced small family-run business." Modernized methods and their cost, plus increasing value of land sold for residences or development compared with the lesser return from small farming have squeezed out the smaller poultry operations. Bigness as well as good management seems essential to survival.



The Schoonmaker boys: Jack, Bob, Dick, Jim and Ted with sister Ruth's husband. (Esther Schoonmaker Pray)

Christmas Day
1943

Mr and Mrs John Schoonmaker
Friends and neighbors! We
received your Christmas card
to us. Since the fire I have felt
like writing a note to you, so
this is our Christmas message.

As I sat in your house that
fateful morning I tried to realize
what it would all mean to you,
not only in your financial loss but
in your 1944 program. However
what I carried away was the
privilege of witnessing the working
of an ideal family. Jonnie offering
words of consolation to his mother,
the brother suggesting he not
ask his father too many questions,
Jonnie asking if it would be
all right to say "Hi Dad" was

very revealing of the thoughtfulness of each for the other.

The very serenity of the home in a hectic morning was good to witness. I shall not soon forget an ideal little family situated on Bay Road in Amherst.

Sincerely

W. N. Atkins



Jack Schoonmaker, owner of Mt. Norwottuck Farm, who got his training in the poultry industry from his father, Robert S. Schoonmaker, is shown here trapnesting his "Pureline" White Rocks. (1949)



Ann Schoonmaker, Jack's wife and co-worker, with a "Pureline" White Rock male. He looks like any other White Rock but genetically he is different, the result of the young Schoonmakers' work in poultry breeding. (1949)

ATKINS DESCRIBES OLD TRANSPORTATION WAYS

September 26, 1952

Mr. William H. Atkins of South Amherst, former Amherst selectman for 36 years, and now recognized as one of Amherst's best informed persons on local history, addressed the September 18 luncheon meeting of the Amherst Rotary club. Mr. Atkins discussed the growth of transportation in the town since the days of the horse, and described 1750 as the first year of local transportation on wheels. The stagecoach was the modern way of travel from 1750 to 1850, when railroad service became the transportation means of the era. In 1842 the Boston and Albany road was in operation, to be quickly followed by a rail line to Northampton and Greenfield in 1845.[1]

Mr. Atkins said the most awaited development in Amherst was the advent of rail connection with the outside world. This came near to accomplishment when a line was surveyed in 1846 from Millers Falls to Willimansett on the Amherst side of the river, through Sunderland and Amherst, swinging close to the foot of Amity street hill and continuing through Hadley and Hockanum. Great enthusiasm ran riot. In one week the people of Amherst subscribed $90,000 and Hadley $20,000 toward this project, but it was abandoned in 1848 for lack of sufficient funds.

Mr. Atkins said Amherst, however, was not to be denied rail connections, as the Amherst and Belchertown rail line was opened for travel in 1853. A cross road was planned to Northampton, both in 1848 and 1864, but, again for lack of funds, had to be abandoned. In all this rail extension debate, Amherst was not forgotten in its effort to reach Northampton as in 1870 the Central Massachusetts rail line was surveyed. The town of Amherst voted $100,000 to help finance this venture. However, as troubles and failures beset this road for nearly 20 years, it was not completed for travel until 1887.

The first electric car in Amherst was in 1897 and the first to Holyoke in 1902. The last car was run in 1932. The first electric car to Northampton was in 1899 and the last in 1933.



An excursion train on C & V tracks, probably Warren Wright Road crossing, Belchertown, about 1915. (Steven Puffer, Jr.)

"Passenger service on all these rail lines now is but a pleasant memory," Mr. Atkins concludes. "The bus and airplane have superceded and taken over control."





A "Tally Ho", a coach with four horses, taking a full load over the mountain. (cir. 1912, Marian Hawthorne Lyman)



Robert Stiles stands beside his Buick in August, 1928, proud of his new bumpers! (Stuart Stiles)



Ernie Anderson identifies this picture in his letter which follows. (Amherst Record files)

TROLLEY ARTICLE
July 28, 1984
G. Ernest Anderson, Jr.

This picture was taken at the Connecticut Electric Railway Association trolley museum in Warehouse Point, Connecticut, probably spring of 1972 or 1973.

The people shown are, from the left, Baxter Eastman, my daughter Carol (on the car, peering over the railing), my son Russell, and myself. The picture was probably taken by Bill Wood of the Connecticut Electric Railway Assn., with whom I worked extensively in the spring, running school charters. The occasion, as I recall, was the First Congregational Church Preschool outing. Both my children attended that preschool. Baxter Eastman and I would tell the children about trolleys; I would play Mr. Rogers temporarily, since most of the children watched Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood on public T.V. and were aware that "trolley-trolley" took them to the land of make-believe. Baxter was hard-of-hearing, but had some marvelous stories, and loved to be taken to the trolleys. He was in seventh heaven if we handed him the key and said, "Here, you run it."

If I remember correctly, the picture was published in the Amherst Record, with the title something like "three generations of Amherst Trolley Men." Baxter, of course, worked the Holyoke Street Railway's Amherst Division for many years (and is wearing his conductor's hat from that work). My son, who has just graduated from high school, is not now active with the trolleys; however, his Eagle Scout project was the interior restoration of Montreal Tramways open observation car #4 at Warehouse Point. My dad worked his way through Harvard with the Lexington and Boston Street Railway; a bit of that rubbed off on me with a number of "last trips" my dad took me on as trolleys were being abandoned in the late 1930's. I still operate the old cars occasionally at the trolley museum, and have served as director and treasurer in years past.

The car, Connecticut Company 840, is a 15-bench open trolley similar to the larger open cars of the Holyoke Street Railway which occasionally operated over the Notch to Amherst when crowds were heavy. In those days, people rode the open trolley on hot days just to cool off; the wind-chill factor was indeed in operation as cars like this got up to speed out in the country. Number 840 was part of the famous Yale Bowl fleet in New Haven. It was last in regular service for the Harvard-Yale game in November, 1947; it was the last car (ever) to leave Yale Bowl at the end of that game, and hence the last open trolley ever to operate on the streets and by-ways of any American city. The car is still running today. Our "spiel" about the car includes: "If your automobile were 79 years old and running this well you would be very pleased."

The museum line was originally part of the Broad Brook and Rockville branch of the Hartford-Springfield Street Railway, in operation from 1906 until 1926. Its biggest attraction was the now non-existent Piney Ridge amusement park, located several fare zones away from large population centers so the trolley company got you coming and going as well as at the park. Many other former street railway parks are still in business, including Mountain Park in Holyoke. We have three miles of the old right of-way and the site of Piney Ridge, with about one and one-half miles now in operation. Ironically, the museum track has operated longer as a museum than as a real trolley line.

Times do change. In the late 1940's and into the 1950's we were (almost literally) acquirers of junk. In the 1960's we were considered collectors



"Horse shoe" bend in trolley tracks over the Mt. Holyoke Range at the Notch. Trolley can be seen in the distance. The Amherst-Holyoke run lasted just 30 years, 1902 to 1932, losing out to the automobile.
(Postcard S. Puffer Jr.)



Just below the dam was the old iron bridge (cir. 1875) over the Fort River at Mill Valley, prior to construction of the new less attractive concrete bridge. Iron bridge was retained as safe for pedestrian crossing. Asahel Dwight's wooden pump making factory to left, grist mill, still preserved 1985, at right. (Steven Puffer Jr.)

of antiques! But come the energy crises of the 1970's, we were the proud preservers of a priceless American technical heritage, that of the light railway. Transit officials from all over the country visited us to learn again how to build and operate light railways, as the trolleys of the future are now called. There is more electric railway mileage operating today than there was in 1955.

Trolleys left their mark on Amherst in several ways, as we occasionally point out to school children even though Baxter Eastman is no longer with us. The Public Works depot on South Pleasant is the old carbarn, and youngsters signing up for Little League often wonder what the rails are doing inside the barn. The freight connection track with the B & M just south of Amherst College is still there, although the B & M track is now gone also. The old right-of-way over the Notch makes fine cross country skiing. The old trolley routes out of Amherst can still be traced by early 1900 homes along the way. Until the trolley, most working people lived within walking distance of work, a restriction that was eased when the trolley came. One of the old Amherst and Sunderland Street Railway barns on Cowles Lane in North Amherst (a predecessor of the Holyoke Street Railway) is today used to house Peter Pan busses laying over in Amherst.



ONE APRIL day in the mid-'20s, a trolley car on the Amherst-Pelham line went off the tracks and into the Freshman River east of the Main-North East Street intersection. Mildred Dickinson submitted the accompanying news article of the accident.

Amherst Trolley accident - 1920's

Amherst, April 24 - A trolley car on the Pelham division of the Holyoke Street Railway company jumped clear of the track, dived head on into the Freshman river, completely wrecking the bridge and landing with nose in the water and rear wheels in the air, just opposite the Amherst Gas company's properties on Main Street, tonight. The car was the one which leaves Pelham at 6:30 and was carrying seven passengers into Amherst center. None of the passengers were injured, except for a severe shaking-up and bruises.

Percy Eddy, motorman, and John Shine, conductor, were in charge of the car. Both of these men have been in the service of the trolley company for several years. No cause has been found for the accident. The bridge which crosses the Freshman river is also used for vehicular traffic and is a total loss except for the trolley rails and supporting timbers. The accident drew a big crowd.

The wrecking crew from Holyoke was at work a short time after the accident and it is expected that trolley service will be resumed tomorrow. Automobiles will have to detour on the new Amherst-Belchertown road until repairs can be made.



Meeting of Amherst & Sunderland Trolley Motorman & Conductors, April 1955. Front r, l. to r.: Daniel Dowd, Robert Fitts, Abe Duval, Harold Hobart; Back r, l. to r.: Harland Wood, Percy Eddy (motorman on trolley that ran off rails at Freshman River in mid-1920's east of Main-North East St.), Steve Duval, Stephen Puffer, Jr., Baxter Eastman. Last trolley car in Amherst ran in 1932. (Steve Puffer, Jr.)

AUTOMOBILE FEVER IN AMHERST

Amherst Journal Record
Feb. 6, 1949
W. R. Brown

Martin D. Gold, according to a statement that appeared in the **Amherst Record** when he died in 1924, was the first man in Amherst to own an automobile. It was a Grout Steamer made in Orange, and was steered by a lever or handle. In appearance it resembled a buggy more than an automobile. When be bought it, no one now remembers, but probably it was just before the turn of the century.

Among the early car owners in this town were, Dr. H.G. Perry, Dr. H.H. Seelye, Dwight Billings, "Colonel" Houghton, Leonard Hills, Fred Hawley, and Ernest Smith of East Street, South Amherst. The latter, some say, was the first to own a gasoline car in Amherst. Mr. Smith was a farmer and pursued mechanics as a hobby. He built the car excepting the engine and appurtenances himself, and naturally was very proud of it. It would run all right downhill and on level ground, but Mrs. George Crowther of Dana Street, says it could never make the sharp pitch at the east end of Potwine Lane onto South East Street without considerable shoving from the rear. Once, Mrs. Crowther says, he ventured to go to Plainfield, where, as everyone knows who has ever been there, there are plenty of hills. He made it although several times he had to get horse or ox power to help the car over the pitches.

None of the cars, prior to the Stanley Steamer, had much power, but sometimes the drivers had trouble in stopping them. Fred Hawley says that once Leonard Hills couldn't stop his new Ford, and ran it around and around his yard until help arrived. Another driver was not able to stop his Duryea and when he drove into Dr. Rawson's barn where he kept the machine, he kept on going right through the boarding out on the other side.

"Ned" Smith, who for many years, owned what is now the Maxwell farm on the Montague Road, was a horseman of note. One day, shortly after he bought his first automobile, a violent thunder storm came up and he decided to run the car into his barn. Just as he was going in the big double doors started to blow to, and he saw he might be caught between them. Instead of shutting off the power and applying the brakes he pulled on the steering wheel with all his might and hollered "Whoa! Whoa!" But the vehicle didn't hear and kept on going taking the doors along with him, not because he wanted them, but because, as Mark Twain once said under somewhat similar circumstance, it was more convenient.

The oldest car in Amherst that is now in running condition, is a 1910 five-passenger Stevens Duryea, owned by Ernest M. Whitcomb. It has been run well over 150,000 miles. Mr. Whitcomb says he could now, if he wished, sell it for at least a thousand dollars.



Duryea and his "Speed Wagon". (AAA Magazine, 8/1985)



One of the first cars in S. Amherst. On front "rumble seat"; David Hawthorne, Marian Hawthorne. George Hawthorne sits beside the driver, Wm. McKenzie, last agent at S. Amherst depot and owner of the car. (cir. 1910, in front of Winfred Cowles' house). (M. H. Lyman)

For some years after the coming of automobiles, there was in Amherst considerable prejudice against them. They were looked upon as rich men's toys and as nuisances to the general public, especially to horse owners. By 1915, however, public attitude toward the new style of vehicles had changed. In March of that year the Amherst correspondent for the **The Springfield Republican** wrote in part, as follows: — "The automobile fever is raging in Amherst. All efforts of the doctors, the Board of Health and the Overseers of the Poor to check it have failed. There were but few outbreaks during the fall and winter months, but evidently the germ was working, and now in a large percentage of the families there is at least one member suffering from the malady. One who now condemns the automobile in face of its demonstrated utility, is not part and parcel of this generation; he is merely a relic of things and conditons there were."

From this period on, until the depression struck in October of 1929,



Mrs. Mary Thorpe wears the wedding dress of Mrs. Truman Coe to a special program, 1930. (Paul Thorpe)



Stiles converted what was said to be the earliest fruit stand on West St. into a gas station, opposite his house and farm. Picture 1940, Mobilgas and the flying red horse; lighted globes at the top of the pumps; free air for the tires; new tires displayed for sale. Coca-Cola was available. Striped awnings decorated the windows. In the background stands Mt. Pollux. Hampshire College bought and moved the structure across the road where it is now an Admissions office.



Robert Collins of 1120 S. East St. drives his antique Stanley Steamer, giving a touch of class to the 1974 wedding of Susan Cowles (front seat) to Donald Crutch of No. East Street. Nancy Cowles (with her back to her sister), faces Janine King (now Goodhind). Note toolbox on running board. (Picture from Amherst Record morgue)



Four West Street ladies take a ride in the Packard, 1931: Ida Shumway, Mary Thorpe, Inez Swan at the wheel, and Ennestine Slany. (Paul Thorpe)

the number of automobiles in Amherst went forward by leaps and bounds. Then it slowed up for a few years. For instance, in 1931 there were 2141 motor vehicles registered here, and exactly the same number in 1932. In 1946 there were practically 2710 registered from Amherst.

Only relatively few people have anything more than a very hazy idea of what it costs to run a car. It, of course, depends largely on the car and the driver, and the number of miles travelled in the course of a year. The more miles, because of fixed overhead charges that are the same anyway, the less the cost per mile. Sumner R. Parker, who has for years kept a careful record, says that it cost him last year to run his Buick sedan, 11,000 miles without making any charge for garaging or for collison insurance, four cents a mile.

William R. Cole has broken down the cost of running his Studebaker Commander Sedan which he bought on May 12th, 1943, for $1500, and drove to May 12, 1946, 63,300 miles during the three year period as follows:—

Overhead:		
Depreciation 25% annually	$1125.00	
Interest 5% on $1500x3	225.00	
Garage rent, 3 @ $48	144.00	
Insurance	232.80	
Taxes, exise	42.57	
Regis. and license	15.00	$1784.37
Per mile .0282		
Operating:		
Gasoline, 310 g. @ 22.2	$ 777.22	
Oil, 150 qts, @ .35	52.50	
Tires & Repairs	118.65	
Garage, Service & Replace	460.75	1409.12
		$3193.49
Per mile 02.22		
Total per mile .0504		



Iron bridge of 1881, now gone, over upper branch of the Fort river, on upper So. East St. (McChesney)



Child pretends she is the driver of a "retired" 1929 Ford pickup truck. (cir. 1956, "Abe" Elliott)



"THE 1886 HIGH-WHEELER BIKE"

(Edited from a tape by William C. (Bill) Atkins
for his family - 1933)

"Where did I pick up my high-wheeled bicycle? That's quite a story. I was thirteen to fourteen years of age, I believe, at the time, 1930-31. I used to go down to Ted Kentfield's and play with him and the boys. They had this "high-wheeler." There were no rubber tires on it at all. We pulled it out, and we kids got out a wagon to mount the bike from, and we'd take turns. I'd get on it, ride it, fall off — it was a lot of fun! So I learned to ride it at Mr. Kentfield's. He didn't seem to care and I wanted to buy it. So I asked my dad, "What do you suppose that bicycle is worth?" "Oh," my dad said, "$5." It had no rubber tires or anything else on it, remember. So I went back down to Kentfield's and I asked Mr. Kentfield, "Do you want to sell that bicycle?" "Why," he said, "I don't know what it's worth — What'll you give?" I told him I had asked my father and he had said he thought $5 would be about right. "Well," said Mr. Kentfield, "I'll sell it for $5. I'll take that $5 and put it toward a bicycle so my kids can have a regular bicycle." You could buy a regular brand new one for $15 to $20 in 1930-31. Anyway he sold me the bicycle and I took it home, happy as a peacock.

My dad was on the board of selectmen. So was Jerry Jones. He had come down to the house to see dad. A city celebration was coming up. Saw my old bike and asked if I'd ride it in the celebration! He said to me, "If you get some rubber tires on that bicycle, I'd like to have you ride it in the parade." After a while he said he'd put some rubber tires on it, then I could ride it in the parade. Well, I thought it was a good idea and my dad thought it was a good idea so dad and I took the bicycle over to Northampton to a Mr. Chilson, a blacksmith, on Center street (now Chilson's Shops Inc., 196 Pleasant St., Northampton), who put rubber tires on wagons and so forth. A lost art now. He rubber-tired that bicycle. We also had the seat fixed. Cost $25 to have it put in shape.

Well, parade date came. I was in boy scouts and had signed up for boy scout camp in July. The parade came the same week. So it was worked out that because Howard could also ride the bicycle, he'd ride it. I went on to boy scout camp. I was just fourteen; Howard, nineteen. He rode it. There was a prize for the oldest two-wheel bicycle in that parade. This bicycle was the oldest, so it got the prize.

This same bicycle had been given to Mr. Ernest Smith of So. East street at a bicycle race in 1886 in Springfield, Massachusetts. First prize was for the fastest. He rode this two-wheel bicycle in that race and won the bike as first prize. It had been built in the early 1880's. That is the history of the bicycle.

Mr. Smith was related to the Kentfields. When the Kentfields bought the farm I guess they inherited the bicycle. I was reading a book the other day about old two-wheelers which said these bikes were made for only ten years because they were dangerous. Many people got hurt or killed riding them, especially going down hills. If you put the brakes on, you went over the top and got hurt. That is true. The center of gravity was such that this kind of bike was not safe to ride. They came out with a smaller bicycle, the "safety bicycle."

I still have the bicycle and the rubber I put on is still on it. The spokes need to be respoked. It needs to be fixed up a little . . . Jim will get it. They are now a collector's item. There's just not many of these bicycles around anymore.



Bill Atkins on his "high wheeler" during a July 4 parade on So. Amherst Common. (Amherst Record)

The "high-wheeler" was introduced in England in 1873. The front wheel was almost as tall as a man. The back wheel was very small. Balance was difficult and the rider frequently fell.

The "safety bicycle" appeared about 1880. Both of its wheels were the same size. In addition to rubber tires, it had ball bearings for wheels, coaster brakes, cushion saddles and adjustable handlebars. It was most used in United States from 1889 to 1900. Air-filled tires came in 1889. By 1896 four million regularly rode bicycles. In 1899 there were 312 bicycle factories in the country. - From The World Book Encyclopedia.

One side effect of bicycle popularity was the improvement in road construction . . .

Bill further reports that the last parade he rode in for the South Amherst community picnic, was between 1972 and 74, but in 1982, at a summer picnic on Jenks street, for the fun of it, he mounted the old bike from a truck and rode it a distance until, his accustomed skill gone, he fell off onto the grass. He was then 65.



Addie Hastings, of 859 West St., daughter of J. Chapin Hastings and Sarah Puffer with the new style "safety" bicycle which followed the unreliable "high wheeler". She was a school teacher and collected the West St. pupils after close of the West St. school (on the Hebert, Sumner Parker farm) conveying them to the new grade school on the common. The term "barge" seems to have originated with her horse/bus conveyance (a "covered" wagon painted black) with black doors and the term was used as long as any type of school bus was used for pupils of the new grade school, through the 1930's. (Clara Dwight manuscript at Munson Memorial Library)



Student biking on a modern "skinny wheel" along former West Street trolley track bed; Hampshire College Admissions Office and adapted Stiles house and barn to the left.

Moped.



MOPED, 1900 style, in Amherst

To the editor:

The moped story (Oct. 13) sent me to the family album and evidence of an earlier invasion. Would you believe 1900 in Amherst?

Probably more MO than PED, the "Marsh" had a chain and sprocket on one side and a drive belt on the other. Also note the quadrant throttle on the gas tank and rubber "beep" horn.

I think that my father identified the man with the beard as Edgar Scott, a photographer of the day. Have no idea about the other sport!...Possibly a reader could identify them.

George B. Burnett
(Former A. resident)
773 South St
Walpole, Ma. 02081

Amherst Record, Wed., 11 17 76

Carey Hayward had the first "safety bike" in So. Amherst in the late 19th century. It had "rubber cushion" tires and weighed almost 50 lbs. (W. H. Atkins' 11/2/44 letter to Service Men)

OFF TO SCHOOL ON THE 'Barge' IN THE 1920's

Amherst Record
April 8, 1965
by Marjorie Atkins Elliott

Even as Brainard Lyman was always the mailman, so Charles King for 25 years was the driver of South Amherst school bus. Oddly, the bus was referred to as the "barge". (Addie Hastings is reported to have collected students for the West Street school in the 1890's by a horse pulled vehicle, perhaps called a "barge").(1) Sherwin King remembers it as an open red truck, a Rio; I presume when the snow was deep we got to school by some other means, or that school was closed until the road was open again. In 1932 Mr. King was assigned a real school bus, black and white, which was used until the standardized yellow bus came into vogue.



Addie Hastings: teacher, "barge driver", biker and unmarried caretaker of her mother and her uncle until their deaths in 1910, pictured with her mother on West St. cir. 1910. (Stiles)

The open truck picked up children who lived a mile or more south of the South East Street school on the Green. Mr. King's route took him down Middle street, east on Bay road to the Lord Farm (now Markert's) and north up South East street, making a last stop for the Tiffanys and Atkinses. (The Schoonmaker family, a quarter of a mile north of us, walked or rode bikes.) There were 60 to 64 children in the eight grades back then; perhaps 20 or so came by the "barge". Those who lived north of the school had to walk — the Rocks, Thayers, Main and Matrishon youngsters were the farthest north. One boy, Albert Brace, came over from West street, riding with a boarding teacher or more often on foot. Other West street children rode the trolley up town to a school there.

We children never gave thought to the personal difficulties of our two teachers, social or economic, especially not to their transportation. They, like the sun, always arrived. For one year Mrs. Herbert Hutchings (then Miss Harriet Alvord) boarded in the next house south of the school with the Fred Adamses. Then for three years she boarded with Mrs. William Sanderson on West street, opposite the senior Markerts: I think she drove sometimes. She taught the primary. In 1934, when Miss Howlett resigned due to ill health, the two teachers roomed at the Pomeroys(2). (A Miss Garvey later Mrs. Kershlis, earlier taught the primary.)

Cora Howlett, who taught whole families of children for 20 years, had the upper five grades. She lived just off the Common first house down Middle street on the left and generally walked home at noon to prepare lunch for her father and brother, Ralph. The other teacher would have carried her lunch. In winter time, they both stayed all day.

Own Referees

I don't suppose any teacher today would be expected to eat her lunch and be responsible for a playground with baseball, volley ball and other games going full tilt. But we didn't expect or need supervision as much as children do today; I don't remember any situations that got out of hand. We were our own referees and loud yelling supported fair play.

In spring we ate our lunches outdoors maybe under the forsythia bushes; in winter at our desks. Miss Howlett used to heat some hot soup or drink on the kerosene stove for some of the youngsters who were unable to bring adequate lunches. (I always liked the smell of the lighted match.) I know well enough she paid for this soup out of her own means. I am sure that she received no extra stipend for teaching canning in the summer to girls who wished to learn. In the winter she was both the 4-H sewing teacher and the industrial arts teacher.(3) The boys made stools, benches and desks. The girls worked on kimonos, dresses and horrible blue gym bloomers to the knees. We did everything in the one room — even gymnastics.

There has probably never been a more ingenious or devoted teacher than Cora Howlett — we even wrote our own plays, adapting them from books (one was Arlo) or made them up, producing them for the public on the platform in the Congregational Church.

Best of all, I remember doing no home work, (except sewing on those bloomers!) yet I was not unprepared for high school.

Transportation and High School

Superintendent Jason O. Cook came down one spring day in 1927 and made out the schedule of the four or five of us 8th graders who were going on with our education and that was that, until we approached the mammoth building of Amherst high school that fall. It housed 400 pupils! Transportation to high school involved a big change.

My older cousin, Mabel Miller, had often gone uptown to high school by horseback, leaving the horse at the Amherst livery stable on Amity. But my group, in 1927-31, walked to West street two miles, and took the trolley from there. I think I left home about 7:40 to be sure to connect with the Schoonmakers, also on South East street, and as we walked up the road we were joined by a Cook or two, the Hawthornes, Cowleses, Kings, Bartons, Earl Allis and Ray Wentworth later. We waited outdoors for the trolley, protected in windy weather by the three-sided shelter at West street and West Pomeroy, until the new gas station was built across the road (Chauncey Simmons') and then we had a warm place on cold days.

In the late 1920's the trolley was on its way out.(4) Hardly anyone besides school kids rode the trolley at 8:30 A.M. The more boisterous boys stood at the front, joking with the motorman. (Sometimes he let one of them run it, so I'm told.) We girls sat on the slippery rush seats. I remember how I delighted in the way the trolley turned aside from the highway at Roger Smith's, to avoid the hill, and skirting the back slope went swiftly through the fields until it approached the tranquil beauty of Mill Valley. There it inched across Fort River bridge and the lovely river below. Turning right, it joined the highway that led up South Pleasant street.

School started at nine; we usually took a 2:30 trolley home. On orchestra days we tore out of orchestra rehearsal at 3:20 to make the 3:30 trolley. Now I wonder how Mr. Alexander Richter, and Marc Tarlow after him, succeeded in preparing us for concerts with only one 45-minute rehearsal a week. All the Schoonmakers played in the orchestra. We carried our instruments also for Monday morning assemblies, a measure of devotion surpassing duty, four miles of walking for perhaps two musical numbers.

I understand that now each child living over a mile from school has a ride to the school door, so he is spared the stinging cold of a walk down Pomeroy Lane into a west winter wind. (How often we turned our backs to the wind to lessen the cold!) He also is spared the discomfort of a hot June sun on his back as he approached the Green, up hill. Today he would miss the spread of the Mt. Holyoke Range, now blocked off by houses and bushed. Pastures have disappeared.

There were only three houses on the road then. Two tall elms broke the mile stretch. But I don't remember it as a lonely walk. If we didn't have companions, we had Plum brook to cross and in season, the bobolinks singing in Barton's meadows, and against the sky the indelibly etched line of the Holyoke range, which to me symbolized a kind of stability and security that is with me even today in far off Wisconsin.

Footnotes:

1. On page 83 of Leave the Light Burning the writer states that Addie Hastings of West street, a former school teacher, conveyed children "by a horse bus conveyance" to the (old) school at the Green in 1895, the West Street primary having been closed down in 1894. The primary building was moved back among the farm sheds.
2. Ralph Howlett, brother of Cora, wrote to me that the Howletts moved to S. Amherst when she was 13. She graduated from old Amherst High School on Spring street, and then taught at several small schools in outlying towns — Windsor, West Pelham and a corner of Williamsburg. After a year at Normal School she taught five more years and was principal of an eight-room school at East Longmeadow until her mother's death in 1914 necessitated her return to run the home for her father. So at a much lower salary she taught from then until 1934. She died of cancer in 1937. A complete article, pp. 135-139, in Leave the Light Burning.
3. Page 136. Leave the Light Burning.
4. Nov. 21, 1932, see p. 68-70 in Leave the Light Burning.



The Summer Parker farm roadside fruit stand in the 1920's, West St. Beyond the post at the far right is the former West St. school building used for 102 years; closed in 1894, it was moved back to be part of the F. M. Johnson farm buildings. Parker bought farm in 1920. After his wife's death, the family moved uptwon. Roland Hebert bought the farm. All buildings razed by Hampshire College in the 60's. (Helen Parker deBruyn)

WEST STREET SCHOOLHOUSE

as it was in the 1920's
Excerpts from a letter from
Helen Parker deBruyn
December 3, 1984

"The small separate building to the left of the open garage door — you guessed right — was the old West Street schoolhouse. It had two rooms; we used to store apples in the larger room until too cold, then empty boxes and barrels. The smaller room had a very large brick hearth about 3½ feet square and about the same height. I seem to recollect that the men used the shallow firebox on top for heating up soldering irons and pieces of metal for mending wagon wheels and harnesses, etc. It could have been an oven I suppose but there was no open fireplace beside it. Unfortunately, Louise and I were not aware of its history as a schoolhouse and it's a pity because there was a half loft over the shop part that was full of "junk". We used to explore it. There was a door on the south side, only one.

"The building in the photo to the left of this shop was the horse barn. It held the carriage and the sleigh we went to church in, even the smelly buffalo robe was there. What fun those Sunday afternoons in the winter were when we hitched up "Ned" to the sleigh and rode over to So. East Street to join the Schoonmakers and probably the Atkins, too, and slide down to the foot of Mt. Pollux!"



Chauncey Simmons, general operator of the gas station and store on West St. that afforded warm shelter for students waiting for the 8:30 a.m. trolley for Amherst. Trolley's were discontinued in 1932. (Amherst Journal)



Helen Parker and Paul Thorpe with pony and cart in his yard next door (1924-25). (Paul Thorpe)



Young Paul Thorpe's home between Parker's and Stiles', 1935. (Paul Thorpe)



Neighbor Stuart Stiles on scooter and Leonard Parker on bike in 1926. (Paul Thorpe)

MEET ME AT ORIENT SPRINGS - BY TROLLEY

1880-1920

Amherst Record - Date Unknown

By Mildred Dickinson

William Newell, a shoemaker, native of Pelham, had become quite a mineralogist in odd hours when he wasn't busy at his shoe trade. He became interested and bought in 1853 property later known as the Orient Springs. He believed Amethyst Brook had health giving minerals in it so he tried to commercialize on the idea. Visitors came from far and near to benefit from drinking this water.

Newell built a small house to accommodate them, later selling it. A larger addition was built in 1861 but the whole was destroyed by fire before it was occupied. The property was sold to Dr. Sornborger from Northampton who built this large imposing hotel pictured here, not exactly on the same cellar hole but nearer the highway. There was a beautiful view from this hotel.

It was claimed that the foundation of the building was higher than the tower of Johnson Chapel at Amherst College. Dr. Herman Heed was owner when the building accidentally burned Feb. 23, 1881.



Orient Springs Resort, Pelham, Mass. (Mildred Dickinson)

I believe this was the building referred to in the book "Student Life at Amherst" by George R. Cutting, published in 1871. Under the chapter on "Flag Raisings" it mentions a demonstration occurred on April 29 in 1861 when a flag was raised at "Pelham Springs" at the laying of the corner stone of the Orient House. Also there was marching of the classes in uniform and singing of national airs by the glee club and a salute of thirty-four guns. . . .

It was a wonderful place for an outing when I was a child, After dinner, off came our shoes and stockings and we headed for the brook and a walk up stream. My, was that spring water cold! So the afternoon was spent exploring for pretty stones and flowers.

Perhaps there was a sandwich left from lunch or a cookie to sustain us until it was time to go home. If not, we might make a visit to the little store for a stick of candy or an ice cream cone. Then one last drink at the fountain, over the bridge, up the winding path and through the woods to the trolley stop. We always had to put our ear to the trolley line pole to listen to the humming to see if the trolley was approaching. As the humming grew louder we knew the trolley would soon come around the bend.

Orient Springs under the lofty, sighing pines had the glamour of romance for us. Our elders had told us of the fashionable folk from New York, Philadelphia, and other cities who came in the early fifties during the summer to the Orient House in Pelham, then a well-known watering place. Guests drank of the several springs that bubbled up in the deep ravine — a cure for many ills.

"An Evening of Relic and Recipes" pp. 76-77

From Mary A. Allen's
Around the Village Green



Swaying foot bridge across Amethyst Brook, now belonging to Amherst. (1984, M. Elliott)

Another delight of Orient Springs was Amethyst Brook, so called with reason. Many a lady today wears an inherited ring made from the large amethysts found there.

"An Evening of Relics and Recipes" p. 77

From Mary A. Allen's
Around the Village Green

Amherst Through the Years

From the *Hampshire & Franklin Express* and the *Amherst Record*, now the *Amherst Journal Record*

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The Hampshire & Franklin Express, March 13, 1857

The editor of the Scalpel, in the February number, in an article on the "education of American school girls," has discovered that the frightful practice prevails among young ladies of eating chalk and slate pencils and drinking vinegar to avoid gaining weight.

Adv. Rare Chance, Going West. For sale one of the best Farms in Hampshire County, situated in the South part of Amherst. Three miles from Amherst center, on the road to So. Hadley, 1½ miles from So. Amherst church and post office and ¼ of a mile from school. Said farm contains 54 acres of land . . .There is a gobd supply of Apples, Peaches, Plums and Quince Trees in bearing condition. The house is two story with an L, wood and wagon house, corn house, large barn with sheds, never failing wells at house and barns, a good brook running through a part of the farm. . . Aretas J. Caldwell, So. Amherst, Feb. 27, 1857.

RARE FIND OF McGUFFEY READER

David Malcolm in his Hilltown Neighbors column of the *Springfield Republican* Sunday, February 3, 1952, wrote in regard to the once numerous McGuffey's Readers. After commenting on stray copies of these readers, with 1857 and 1860 dates, he notes, "Ralph Whitcomb of Long Lea Farm, South Amherst, has sent us a fine copy of an old McGuffey Reader that was used in Milwaukee in 1889, which we are pleased to receive and which eventually we fear will return to the Milwaukee State Teachers College. They are sure to inveigle us into parting with the book whenever they hear about it!"

Mr. Whitcomb tells us that as a boy (late 19th century) in his native town of Milwaukee the students were obliged to furnish their own books for school. He now has an assortment of old books of the early dates, not only readers but geography, arithmetics, algebras, and a geometry text. Old school books of 75 and 100 years ago are not very numerous. Mr. Malcolm quotes Miss Pottenger of Springfield as saying after many years of search she only once found a McGuffey Reader in a book or antique shop in New England and that was uncovered at Wiggins Tavern in Northampton, Mass. (*Amherst Record*, February 8, 1952, W. H. Atkins.)

(Editor's Note: Mr. Whitcomb gave me the postcard picture he made of Merrick Woods used in this book and Copy 151 of Elaine Goodale Eastman's The Voice of Eve, her autobiography of a white woman missionary to the Dakota Indians. She married the only Amherst Sioux Indian, an M.D., from Dartmouth and gave the rest of her life to helping him make a better life for the 19th century Indians. Mrs. Eastman, 1863-1930, wrote this autobiography and collection of her poetry, which came out of the year of her death.)

OLD-TIMERS RECALL WAY IT USED TO BE

Amherst Bulletin
October 24, 1984
Nancy Newcombe (abridged)

The men and women who got together for a late afternoon coffee break in the high school cafeteria last week had stories to swap about Amherst when it was an economic frontier. Most of them were still at work when the growth of the University of Massachusetts turned Amherst into a business boomtown.

These were the people who preceded the era of chic shops and the restaurants and walkaway food places that crowd into the central business district.

Donald Hastings told about the newspaper and stationery store on Main Street that his father, Asa J. Hastings, bought in 1914. He took in $37 that first day, and it was obvious that he had a success on his hands.

For years, Hastings recalled, the telephone number at the store was 37. . . .

William White remembered the old days at Jackson and Cutler in the center of town. He used to unlock the doors at 6 a.m. every day, he said, even though the grocery part of the store didn't open until 7 a.m.

He remembered the time he had promoted a sale by putting a good dress in the window with a $1 price tag on it. The dress, he said, couldn't be sold after two bargain-hunters spotted it at the same time and tore it while trying to wrest it from one another.

Actually, he said, it really was a good buy. The average dress went for $3.

Florence Alley, who gave Amherst its first laundromat in 1952, was for many years before that a typesetter for the *Amherst Record*. She reminisced about the legendary Charles F. Morehouse, the editor and publisher of the *Record* who retreated to his house in 1920 and from then until his death dispatched his housekeeper to the paper with his copy each day.

Retired builder Wesley Wentworth of So. Amherst, with a Horatio Alger story, brought up images of another age. In 1900, he said, his father E.H. Wentworth and older brothers drove the family's horses and cattle from Connecticut to Stanley Street. He was 12, he said, when his father died.

Losing the farm was a real danger, and he described his mother's hard work to keep it. Later, two years into high school, he had to leave school and help support the family by cutting pine lumber in the South Amherst Swamp. His brother, Harold, two years older, had already left school.

In the 1920s, Wentworth found work with a local carpenter, who taught him the trade. He ran the cement mixer for 50 cents an hour when the central fire station was built.

During the Depression years, Wentworth said, he went door-to-door looking for work. As times improved he was the builder of the present Louis Foods and, he said, "added to or rebuilt every church in Amherst."

"I've had a good life," he concluded. . . .

Stephen Puffer's view of town business went back even further. He spoke of his mother's family, the Kelloggs, arriving in 1649 and how those who were not killed in the Indian Wars forced a living from the land.

He spoke of his father's family settling in North Amherst in 1837 and of the grist mill that they operated with the Dickinson family. His cellar, he confessed, is almost three-quarters full with old family business records, local photographs and newspaper clippings.



An oil painting of a sleigh ride, horse and cutter on a snowy day, by Richard Lorenz, 1907. (M. Elliott)

OLDER AMHERST RESIDENTS RECALL LAMPLIGHTERS OF FIFTY YEARS AGO

Amherst Journal Record
Thursday, Sept. 13, 1956
by Marjorie A. Elliott

"—O Leerie I'll go round at night and light the lamps with you."

These familiar words from a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson must have been repeated by many a child at the turn of the century and perhaps by young Frank Ledoyt of South Amherst for it was his privilege as a nearby neighbor of the Marsh family to watch Edwin Marsh, the lamplighter of the village, make his rounds.



The home of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ledoyt (next door neighbors to the Marshes), in years since the home of Win Shumway. From here young Frank Ledoyt watched Edwin Marsh light the street lamp. (M.H. Lyman)

On nights when Frank had to stay indoors he waited at the front window for the figure of Mr. Marsh walking down South East street, watching the man go through the familiar routine of resting the ladder against the post of "the lamp before the door," climbing up to refill the lamp with oil and light the wick, stepping down again but remembering to wave at the boy watching. Sometimes young Charlie Marsh substituted for his father and Frank says he often tagged along.

Older boys found it an interesting occupation, too, and according to Mr. C.H. Thayer on Bay Road, the cluster that hung around Merrick's store was wont to follow the genial Mr. Marsh at his task around the green.

There were others responsible for the lamps before Mr. Marsh. In the town report for 1892 we find the first entry of payment for wages for the lighting of street lamps in South Amherst. This was the grand total of $16.00 for the year, paid to a Pat Boyd. The amount staggered us when we first came across it, and still does, although we learn through Carl Dickinson, also once a lamplighter, that there were but three lamps to tend at first. Carl grew up at the town farm, at the corner of South East Street and Depot Road, where his father was warden.

From 315 East Street, Ontario, Cal., Carl writes in his inimitable style: "Regarding the street light question: I think it must have been some time around 1890 or 1892 when they were installed and I believe I was the first one entrusted with their operation and maintenance. At first there were three of 'em, one at the store, one at the north end of the Common and another at the south end near the church. The salary I received was five dollars per lamp per year, and at this late day I am unable to remember whether I mentioned the amount in my income tax report.

"When the moon was on the job, the lamps were not lit, as the town didn't care to waste money competing with the said moon. I manufactured a ladder from a couple of birch poles, which I carried on my rounds, and usually left it by the store lamp, as I figured my handiwork could be admired by more people as they came for their mail or groceries.

"Being of a thrifty nature I did not wash the lamps' chimneys too often, as I reckoned they would last longer if not scrubbed too much. I remember Alf Bates watched me light the store lamp one evening and sagely remarked that it gave as much light as two white beans which was no doubt quite close to the truth.

"It seems as though two more lamps were installed but am not absolutely sure of that. You know I migrated from the old town in 1901 and as the Missourians would say, that's a right smart long time ago. The lamp posts were square, at least that is as I remember 'em. Wouldn't take an oath on it though, for fear some other venerable individual would up and accuse me of fabrication."

The names of the men in charge of the lamps are not often given in the town reports of the 90's; we are indebted to the Dwight sisters of South Amherst for recalling Carl's part and for sending us his entertaining account.

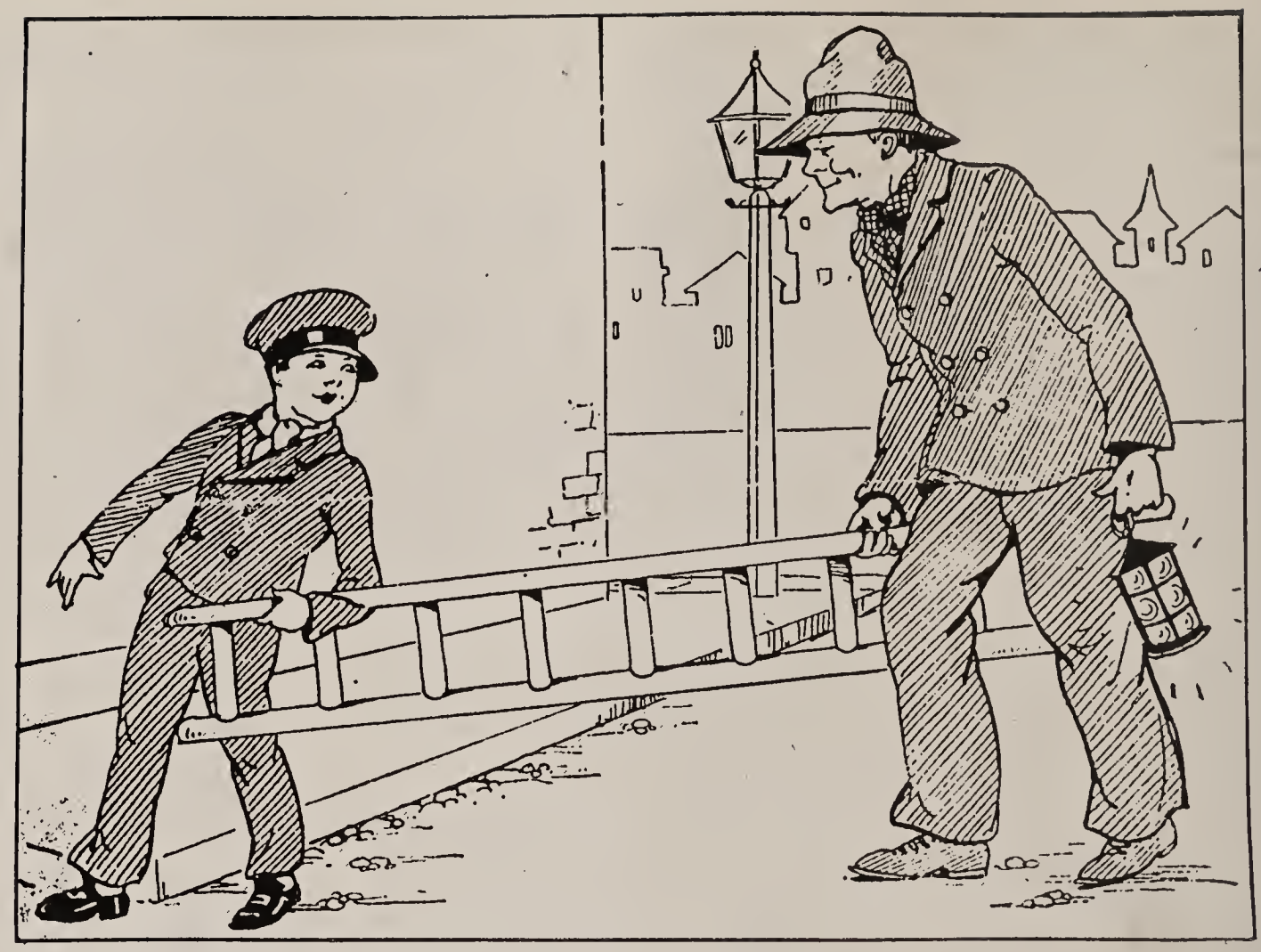
After 1900 some names appear, usually of men who resided near the Common. Charles King who took over Merrick's store in 1909 and Charles Shaw, son of Postmaster and Store-Owner Charles Shaw, assisted by Herbert Dwight, are listed as men who made the rounds. A payment of $3.84 to Merrick and Howlett in 1901 suggests a bill for supplies.

Additional lights were gradually installed in South Amherst. Ralph Howlett remembers one at the intersection of the Common in front of the Morell residence (which burned in

(Cont. p37)



The home of Edwin Marsh, lamplighter in 1902, built by ancestor Jonathan Marsh born 1749. Four generations of Marsh descendants lived here. (H. McChesney, 1972)



Lamplighter with young helper. (Edna Meudt)

The Lamplighter

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;
It's time to take the window to see Leerie going by;
For every night at teatime and before you take your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,
And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be;
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I'm to do,
O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the lamps with you!

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,
And Leery stops to light it as he lights so many more;
And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!

—Robert Louis Stevenson

FIFTY YEARS AGO - in SOUTH AMHERST
(or 1907)
Amherst Record, winter, 1957

Miss Cora Howlett, teaching in North Dana, is at home for two weeks vacation.

Frank T. Ives has bought the E.T. Darling place on the Bay Road and will move to it April first.

Andrew Ledoyt will light the street lights this coming year.

The contract for painting the church has been given to Allen Brothers, who will do it as soon as spring arrives.



Two playmates, Dorothy Marsh (Koeber) and Marion Hawthorne (Lyman). Dorothy continued to live in her ancestral home. Marion married and moved away. Marion's mother boarded school teachers: the Misses Grace Mixer who taught primary, her sister Helen who taught the grammar classes. Also the Misses Pettingill, Fuller, and Young in other years. The Hawthornes lived in the present day Homer Cowles' house. (M. H. Lyman)

1900), one at the head of Depot road and three down South East street from the church, in front of Chas. King's home, the Billings' and finally E.N. Marsh's (where the Holts, fifth generation in that family, live today). That was the last light on that street. Anyone walking beyond had best carry a lantern.

And even a lantern was no safeguard from bicycle traffic. Ralph Howlett recalls that elderly Joseph Dana, walking to midweek prayer meeting at the church, was toppled over by a youth riding in the dark. He was said to have remarked later, in his deliberate manner, "I'd rather carry two lanterns than be run into."

By 1901 the town of Amherst was paying $50.00 a year for care of the lamps in South Amherst. This was but a fraction of the total amount, $3,700.00, paid by the town for street illumination. Amherst Center was lighted by gas lights and had already installed some "arc" lights and a few incandescent lights.

In 1902 E.N. Marsh was the man in charge of the lights. And with 1904 a sudden increase in his yearly salary to $102.00, and the fact that the Standard Oil Company was paid sums from $60.00 to $100.00 per year supports the belief that the lights along Pomeroy lane were installed at this time.

Mrs. Mabel Harris of Amherst, one of Marsh's daughters, recalls her father's route. A carpenter by trade, he walked across Pomeroy lane each morning, left his can of kerosene, mess of cloths and small ladder at the trolley shelter on West street and took the trolley to Amherst where he worked for the contractor, Will Smith. At dusk, he got off the trolley, gathered up his unmolested articles, and proceeded home on foot, cleaning a chimney if necessary, refilling and lighting each lamp as he came up the hill. Around the Common he walked, like a Pied Piper with youngsters at his heels, then to his home and the last lamp before his door.

There could have been no better tie-in with a daytime job. In addition, however, he was a constable and at one time, his daughter says, janitor for the South Congregational church.

Perhaps he worked too hard for illness beset him and Andrew Ledoyt, his neighbor next door, with son Frank as assistant became responsible for the lamps.

Earl Howlett received $10.00 in 1909. H.J. Hillman $20.00 in 1910 and



Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ledoyt sitting in front of their Ledoyt home. (M. H. Lyman)

Chas. King about the same but Ledoyt was paid $96.70, so he must have been the chief lamplighter.

In 1911 Mr. Marsh did a bit of work but Chas. King carried the brunt of it. Then, less than 60 years of age, Mr. Marsh died. With him passed a colorful era.

For in the town report for the year ending 1912, Article 38 of the warrant reads: "To see if the town will vote to place 30 incandescent lights at South Amherst and raise and appropriate the sum of $450.00 for the same." The board of finance took a charitable stand, stating we "feel South Amherst is entitled to the electric lighting system which is enjoyed by all the town and we recommend that the town raise and appropriate for the purpose a sum not to exceed $450.00, the selectmen to determine the number and location of lights."

Electric lights came to South Amherst. In the report of 1913 no money was expended for care of lamps in South Amherst. Kerosene lamps were now a thing of the past.

The posts and shades stood for a while after the installation of electric lights, according to Cliff Tiffany. No one today is sure of the design. Miss Dwight believes the shade was 4-sided. Mr. Dickinson thinks the post square cut. Cliff Tiffany says they were not very high, maybe 8 to 10 feet. He should know.

Once he and Carl Goodrich, being idle at the moment, tossed some stones at the anachronistic lamp and post near Will Smith's. Their aim was accurate. The misdemeanor was seen. My father who heard of it felt this behavior should be curbed then and there. So young Carl and Cliff were given a free ride to the selectman's office in Amherst and there, before the board of three men, received a talking to that Cliff admits today scared him plenty. There was no fine, no whipping, but there was plenty of time to remember the discussion on the care of public property as they walked the three miles home. It should be added: neither the cause nor cure was repeated.

We should like to know what happened eventually to the post and lamps. We expect in the name of progress they were discarded at a town dump. Perhaps someone will recollect their removal. Maybe a post and lamp stands in someone's garden, a reminder of those twenty years in South Amherst, when in the words of Stevenson, a child felt "very lucky with a lamp before the door."

Lamplighters in South Amherst, some serving more than once, between years 1892 and 1913: Pat Boyd, Carl Dickinson, E.N. Marsh, Chas. Marsh, Andrew Ledoyt, Chas. King, Chas. Shaw, Herb Dwight, Earl Howlett and H.J. Hillman. Frank Koeber, grandson of E.N. Marsh, also assisted Andrew Ledoyt.



A beautiful picture of Mrs. Andrew Ledoyt in the full ruffled apron and hairdo of her times, holding the family pet. (M.H. Lyman)

SOUTH AMHERST CANNING PLANT

May 25, 1985

by Charlotte W. Miller McChesney

In the early spring of 1914, Charles W. Miller of Quincy started a new industry on South East Street, South Amherst. This was a quality home canning business set up in two basement rooms of his brother-in-law's new 1905 home. In the same year Mary H. Atkins married Charles Miller in the Atkins family's new home and moved to Quincy, MA. In 1911 Naomi Howard of Belchertown became William Atkins' wife and by 1914 was the mother of Howard and Marjorie. The canning lab came to life each summer when the Charles Miller family moved up from Quincy to preserve fruits and vegetables. They lived next door in a cottage.



First cousins living next door each summer: Mabel Miller, Howard Atkins, Charlotte Miller and Marjorie Atkins. About 1917.

Charles Miller canned in glass jars, his aim to attract customers who could afford relatively high prices or were connoiseurs of a top quality product. Purchasing his fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms and market gardeners made the business very much a local area industry.

Why he ventured into this type of business, canning, is not definitely known. His interest may have been sparked by attendance at Horticultural Shows in Boston. There he met Professor Walter Chenoweth from Massachusetts Agricultural College (now University of Massachusetts). He became of inestimable assistance to Mr. Miller's enterprise and a lifelong friend. Another one of the pioneers was Mr. Onthank of Kivlanand Onthank, glass makers and designers. He it was who developed a unique straight-sided jar for the canning of asparagus, spears held upright, which was called the Victory jar, with a flat lid as opposed to the standard lightning top jars. (Like present day Balls.)

Mr. Miller's first customers were acquired by his taking a sample case around door to door and taking orders in the spring for fall delivery. He canvassed prospects in affluent suburbs around Boston, Cambridge, Milton, Lexington, Belmont, Newton and Quincy, before he gave up an express wagon business he operated in Quincy. In the Western Massachusetts area he went as far south as Enfield, Connecticut. Springfield, Longmeadow, Holyoke, South Hadley, Northampton were included in the trips for clientele.

The business prospered and grew large enough to warrant building a plant in 1921 at the foot of Atkins' orchard (Mt. Pollux) across the street, north of the old Albert Dickinson (Lyman) property which later became the Tiffany place. The factory was an attractive brown-shingled building set back on a wide lawn. It became a model operation. Mr. Miller hired up to ten women during the years 1919-1928. Due to his close relationship with Professor Walter Chenoweth he was knowledgeable of new ideas and advances in the technology of canning, many of which he incorporated into his process. An example was the purchase of a large steam pressure cooker replacing one of the hot water bath boilers. This new method was used for corn, peas, beans, and chicken. It cut processing time and made the product safer. This writer remembers classes from M.A.C. coming down to tour the plant and watch the processing.



Interior of C. W. Miller's canning laboratory. (Charlotte M. McChesney)

Interesting lines from Mr. Miller's diary tell of the "housewarming party" for the new plant on October 27, 1922. "50 in the afternoon, 150 in the evening; through at 10:30." Refreshments were served, cocoa, punch, and goodies. The two women who worked for him regularly were there to help: Lila M. Tiffany and Nellie (Mrs. Stanley) Lombard. More festivities were held there that fall. "Mabel (his oldest daughter) had a girls' Halloween party in the new building, 7:30-10:30." On November 1, "Prof. Chenoweth brought down two groups of men to tour the building," and again on November 3, two more groups.

His canned wares included vegetables from Hadley's growers, of the earliest dandelion greens, spinach, and asparagus straight through the season to squash and corn. Almost all fruits including pineapple (purchased in city markets) were processed. He personally contracted with the growers for the best quality vegetables and fruits.

At the end of the season were the pickles. (Pickle buying recalls some background - throughout the years he owned three Stanley Steamers, always giving rides to neighbors and children on his forays into the country. The third Steamer was a condenser model requiring less water. Rides were not without incidents. On one evening returing from Deerfield with cucumber pickles, everyone was startled as flames shot up through the front floor boards. We stopped. A farmer saw us and came out with two milk cans of water and doused the

fire. That trip was memorable to Marjorie Atkins, about five years old. Later her uncle bought a Hupmobile - about 1927.)

Other fall products were conserves, jellies, and juices. Chicken became a specialty. His luxury items were raspberries and "raspberry shrub," an acidulous drink. For years he donated all the communion grape juice to Bethany Congregational Church, in Quincy, MA, and Second Congregational Chuch in Holyoke, MA.



by "Abe" Elliott

An item introduced later and made late in the fall in Amherst, and in the winter in Quincy was "Tiffany Quality Candies" both chocolates and caramels. They were well received and provided some off-season work.

Lila Tiffany, daughter of Fred and Lena Tiffany, was Mr. Miller's "right hand man" and became his chauffeur when he became unable to drive himself. Mr. Miller suffered from severe arthritis and walked with the aid of two canes.

Women workers were: Bertha Tiffany (Lila's sister), Alice (Mrs. Clifford) Tiffany, Nellie (Mrs. Stanley) Lombard, Grace (Mrs. Max) Lowe, Helen (Mrs. Arthur) Stedman, Mary Smith, daughter of inventor Ernest Smith, 1555 South East Street, Hazel (Mrs. Truman) Smith, 1270 South East Street, Mrs. Duane Smith, Shay Street, and Olga Kisilewski of Bay Road. Besides these women during the summer the Peter Couch girls, ~~Sophie~~ and Helen, Bay Road, and Charles' wife, Mary, and two daughters, Mabel and Charlotte, helped.

Jenny



Lila Tiffany lighting the pilot to Chas. Miller's Stanley Steamer (cir. 1924, courtesy Lila Tiffany)

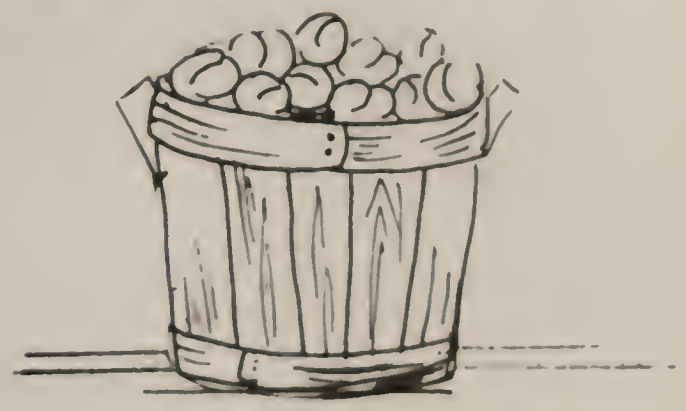
All supplies of produce were from the area. Some recalled are: William H. Atkins, South Amherst – pears, apples, peaches and currants; Groff – South Amherst – strawberries; Randall in Hadley – asparagus; Peter Couch, South Amherst – peas; Mattie Bolter, South Amherst – peas, lima beans, string beans.

Business peaked in 1928, continued through World War II, although severely curtailed by sugar rationing. Consequently, Miss Tiffany carried on the work alone. Mr. Miller gave his attention then to employment for many years at the Amherst Town Hall, as Works Progress Administration Coordinator and later as World War II Rationing Board Administrator.

In 1948, the plant was shut down and sold to the Amherst Fish Rod Company, Inc. It specialized in fly rods and spinning rods from 1948 to 1951. Mr. French, Arthur Davenport, and Wesley Wentworth were owners.



Cousin Charlotte Miller McChesney, author of this article, and her husband Herbert, author of the 600 page History of Ludlow, Mass. 1978, which was funded by the Ludlow Bicentennial Commission. (Courtesy C. Miller McChesney)





A 1985 picture of the former canning lab adapted for apartments. (Barbara Tiffany)



Stiles standing in front of the earliest fruit stand on West Street across from house; apples sold by the peck to the motoring public. The South Amherst Apple Exposition was held there in the late 1920's. The building is now used by Hampshire College. (Robert Stiles)

Mr. Miller retired and conducted a magazine business from his home entirely by telephone.

From 1951 to 1952 the building was in the words of Mr. French, "just sitting there." In 1952 the Rod Company leased it to the American Aerovac Co. of New York to use as a lab to discover "better and faster ways to kill insects."

In recent years the building was under several ownerships, one, a wholesale book company, using it for storage. A north end apartment was arranged by the next owner, Howard Atkins; in the late '60s a south end apartment was added to meet the needs of the new arrivals, the Harold Gould family until they had their house. Howard continued to use attic and basement for storage. About five years ago, an attic apartment constructed, the building was bought by David Keenan who has since sold it. Its future is unknown.

The building may be seen on South East Street much as it used to look. However, no window boxes filled with petunias or roses climb the trellises of the brown-shingled building. In 1985 it provides a home for a large and happy family of recently arrived Cambodians.



The Sumner Parker Farm roadside fruit stand in the 1920's on West Street (later the Hebert, and earlier the F. M. Johnson farm). Fruit sold in peck baskets. Sign reads: "We grow what we sell." Helen says the Parker children tended the stand after school, coming home by trolley from school uptwon. Trolley tracks to the right, long since gone. Behind the tree one sees the former school, moved back to that location when the school closed in 1894. (See p. 83, Book I. Helen Parker deBruyn)

Excerpts from
"FAMILY RECOLLECTIONS"
by Mrs. R.S. Schoonmaker of life at
Far View Farm, So. Amherst,
from 1919

The Family Orchestra That Grew

We had a family orchestra, one of the best things that happened, growing from our six children, who played at various levels of skill, to more than double the number as neighborhood musicians joined us.

I wish I could recall how many years we played together, rehearsing in our music-living rooms, Saturday evenings, but I don't.

We started an orchestra with Dad's encouragement. Jack would play and lead from the piano. I got out my old violin.

Soon Leonard Parker of West Street, a good pianist, joined us and that freed Jack to conduct. Then we were nervy enough to ask our good friend Bob Francis to join us. He and Phil Ives, from West Street, played first violin with Marge Atkins and Dick. Rachel Cowles and I played second. Ed Markert came over with his violin. (Ed, Es, Marge and Dick all

Amherst High School Orchestra Which Will Give a Concert, Friday Evening. ***Amherst News*** *3/27/28 South Amherst players: John and Bob Schoonmaker, Ed Markert, Marjorie Atkins, Reno Smith, Preston Barton and Leonard Parker.* ***Amherst Record Release.***



Amherst, Mareh 27 — The high sehool musical elubs will give their first annual eoncert Friday evening at 8 In the high sehool auditorium. The orehestra of 26 pieces, the boys' and girls' glee elubs and the string quartet will all appear.

Alexander Richter, supervisor of music, is in charge of all music activities, and under his direction the orchestra has more than doubled in number of instruments. The orchestral work was started by Miss Blanehe Samuels, now direetor of musie in the Second Congregational church, Holyoke, under Prof W. C. Hammond of Mount Holyoke eollege.

Mr. Riehter plans to make the eoncert an annual affair. The proeeeds will be used for the support of the orchestra.

The officers of the orehestra are: President, Edward R. Markert; secretary-treasurer, Lavenia M. Fulton, and librarian, Edward R. Markert.

The players are as follows: Violins, Dorothy LaPlante, who is also eoncert master, Frederick Wagman, William Landry, Lavenia M. Fulton, Edward R. Markert, Marjorie M. Atkins, Ruth S. Hintze, Louise Cargei, Stephen Kotowicz and Marion L. Dyer; viola, Edward W. Harvey; 'eelios, Martha C. Pray and C. Richard Green; clarinets, Robert S. Sehoonmaker, Edward L. Hill and Dean N. Glick; horns, John W. Sehoonmaker and Howard A. Parsons; eornets, George B. Kentfield and Howard W. Chenoweth; trombone, Reno S. Smith; tympani, Burton J. Goodyear; bass viol, Preston N. Barton; flute, Austin H. Jones; percussion, Leonard W. Parker, and piano, Ruth Pushee.

The members of the glee club are: Sopranos, Esther Noreli, Bessie Novick, Ruth Whitcomb, Gretchen Maehmer, Mildred Chase, Priscilla Sherman, Mildred Seitz, Marjorie Cook, Barbara Keedy, Florence Haskeli and Dorothy Frandsen; altos, Sallie Howe, Roberta Benson, Mary Everson, Lulu Warner, Harriett Fitts, Jean Maekimmie, Elizabeth Fensiek and Ruth Pushee; tenors, John Sehoonmaker, Edward Harvey, Preston Barton, Edward Fawcett and Frederick Wagman; basses, Edward Markert, George Kentfield, Reno Smith, George Burnett and Heetor MacLeod.

The string quartet players are also members of the orehestra and are: Frederick Wagman, first violin; Dorothy LaPlante, second violin; Edward Harvey, viola, and Martha Pray 'eelio.

The oldest, Jack, studied piano with Mrs. Abbott, and organ, but learned the trumpet so he could participate in the high school orchestra. Bob, next oldest, took clarinet of Mr. Davis uptown, but he spent so much time whittling down his reeds that his half-hour of morning practice wasn't as rewarding as it might have been! (Everyone practiced before school.) Es studied 'cello, finally under Miss de Rondo at Smith College. Jim and Ted took up clarinet and trumpet.

became members of the high school string quartet.) Next Reno Smith came up the road to blow his trombone. The music swelled.

Paul Thorpe got drums and his beat added emphasis and authority to our efforts. I think Ed Hill came a few times with his clarinet. Many of these also played in the high school orchestra under Alex Richter and later, Marc Tarlow. We now numbered 15 players to Jack's great delight.

We bought music and got so we played quite creditably. Our first performance was at the Jones Library. We had an enthusiastic reception. Other appearances followed in Northampton, Belchertown, and locally, as in the Munson Library Hall for functions. I believe everyone looks back on this musical get-together with fond memories. As college drew our players away, the orchestra shrank and ceased to be.

Dad missed the Saturday evenings as much as I. We all enjoyed the group playing and performances. In the village of the 1920's there was room in our lives for the simple but satisfying pleasure of a neighborhood orchestra.

(Ed. Note — Once a week Mrs. Schoonmaker collected her family musicians at the So. Amherst grade school, taking them and me, with our instruments up the street to our various instructors. During our lesson period she bought her week's family groceries at A & P. The car was full. Sometimes Es' 'cello shared space with crates of hatching eggs but we all crowded in. Such an undertaking would be hard to duplicate today.)

String Quartet in 1929
1st violin, Marjorie Atkins; 2nd violin, Ruth Hintze; cello, Es Schoonmaker; viola, Ed Markert. (Es S. Pray)



AMHERST TO LOSE ITS MUSIC SUPERVISOR

Alexander Richter Resigns — Has Developed School Talent to Remarkable Degree

Springfield Union - 6/30/29

Alexander Richter, for three years supervisor of music in the the Amherst public schools, has resigned to take a position in Hicksville, Long Island. Mr. Richter is a graduate of Tufts college and he received his master's degree at Amherst college.

Mr. Richter came to Amherst as the successor of Miss Blanche Samuels, who had been the music supervisor in Amherst for many years. Mr. Richter had had long experience in orchestral work. Under his leadership the high school orchestra, which had been founded by Miss Samuels, was enlarged. An orchestra was started in the junior high school. Glee clubs were established in both the senior and junior high schools, and a string quartet was formed in the high school. Last year Mr. Richter started classes in harmony and ensemble. He also taught music appreciation in the senior high school.



Alex Richter, popular music director during 1928-1930. Marc Tarlow succeeded him. (News release)

In the spring of 1928 the combined musical clubs gave their first annual concert, which was a great success. This year another fine concert was given. During music week, Mr. Richter directed a comprehensive demonstration of the teaching of music in the grades with classes of children of different ages from all of the schools.

At the high school graduation the senior high school orchestra played an entire symphony. This is the first that such a difficult selection has been attempted in the high school, and it marks the point in which Mr. Richter intended to bring the orchestra. The symphony was played well and was a fitting climax to Mr. Richter's work in Amherst.

He associated himself with the musicians of this vicinity, playing in Holyoke and in Northampton at Smith college. He stimulated the musical interest of his pupils to a high degree and last year secured the opportunity for one of his pupils, Edward Harvey, to play with the Smith college symphony orchestra in their concert that year.

Thoroughly skilled in his profession and actuated by high musical ideals, Mr. Richter trained his pupils in the execution of classical music of a high order.

Mr. Richter has resigned his position at Amherst because he wishes to be in the vicinity of New York City where he is to continue his musical studies by enrolling for the doctor's degree at Columbia university. He has already passed the examinations for a teaching position in music in the public schools of New York City.



Mrs. R.S. Schoonmaker, happily pregnant, leads the family horse, Bill, with the white face, a small load of hay and large laod of family headed to the barn, l. to r. on the load: Es, Dick, Mr. Schoonmaker, and Jack standing; Bob and Jim on horseback. Truman Smith's building in background. (Jack Schoonmaker)

Our "Dairy"

Of course we had a cow. The first was "Daisy," finally sold, to the children's sorrow. Having wanted a calf to raise, we called the Mass. Aggie and asked them to let us know when they had a little heifer to spare. It was not long before May Queen was ours, a good Guernsey, who gave us a little heifer, Madge. We had also owned two other cows, Brindle and Pansy, who in turn helped fill our big pitchers with milk three times a day.

When Ted joined the 4-H Club be bought himself a beautiful purebred Jersey calf from Mr. Ulysses Groff of West Pomeroy. She was our only purebred and he cherished her, grooming her for fairs where he got several prizes.



Uncle Oliver of PA surrounded by nephews and niece, Dick, Es, Jim, Ted as Mrs. Schoonmaker joins them with milk pail, 1924. (Es S. Pray)

Food

Like many farm families, we had our own cow, hens (White Leghorns from B. Lyman), garden and orchard. We never bought bread or baked goods. The 18 loaves of homemade bread which I baked weekly during the peak of our family life, the big white enamel bowl filled with apple sauce, the quantities of cottage cheese (one of the by-products of our cows) in addition to the silver pitcher, the pewter pitcher and the "Deer" pitcher filled with foaming milk, resulting in good strong teeth and bodies.

We had a good garden every summer. When string beans were at their best we set a crew of children tipping and cutting around the kitchen table while two others at the sink washed the beans and filled the jars. With a sense of family pride the boys carried the green and golden vegetables down to the cellar shelves the next day, food to be brought out later when the wind and snow blew around the house. One year we put up 99 quarts! We tried to do 100 quarts of tomatoes and some corn as well as pears and peaches.

The Horse - a Family Pet

After we got to Far View Farm we realized we would need a horse as we were four miles from the stores. Dad learned through Mr. Webb at the A & P that someone up in Pelham wanted to put their horse out for its keep for the winter. So he took the trolley car as far as it went out Pelham Road, walked the rest of the way, and made arrangements to take her. "Dolly" was a gentle dark bay. By spring we had enough money to buy a horse for ourselves so we returned Dolly and dear old Bill came into our lives. We had him for 10 wonderful years.

School lunches

Apple jelly filled quart jars for the school lunches which Bob helped me with mornings before breakfast. He became very adept at slicing up a loaf of bread into 16 pieces. I filled thermos bottles and added a piece of raisin cake or cookies to each pile before wrapping them in wax paper. Some sandwiches were put into brown paper bags. Ted always returned his bag to the kitchen cabinet after coming in the back door from school, proud when he could make his bag last the whole week.



Mr. and Mrs. R.S. Schoonmaker at Jim's house on Middle Street — 1940's. (Es S. Pray)

Ration books of World War II were issued to every individual covering such things as flour, sugar, shoes. Gas was awarded to guidelines of necessity — A, B, and C. I believe A was the most restricted. Tires and recapped tires were also allotted. (F.I. Elliott)

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WAR RATION STAMP 20

WAR RATION STAMP 19

The Sept. 21, 1938 Hurricane

When we awoke that morning of September 21, 1938 no one expected untoward weather. We'd had much rain and the ground was sodden. After dinner, Dad and Dick went into the East orchard to pic Macs. Jim was at college; Jack and Ann were busy at their farm with the regular poultry duties. I was scheduled to go uptown with Dot Lyman to pick out a gift for the new minister, Rev. Leland Hunt, for whom there was to be a reception that evening. I sent Ruth Anne up to play at Harold Wentworth's next door. While Dot and I were at the Mutual Plumbing listening to radios, selecting the best one, an announcer broke into the program to report a very high wind and that a branch had broken from a tree near the studio; the program continued. Then the announcement that a tree had been uprooted. As the voice spoke, the radio went dead!

By now the wind was blowing at a great rate outside. We started for home. I don't recall whether we took the radio with us or not! Rain fell in sheets. I drove as carefully as possible to avoid the branches which were now falling along the road. We drove past our So. Amherst church, got as far as George Holt's but a tree had fallen blocking the road there. I drove the car into his drive, facing it into the closed garage. We started walking the half mile to our house but could hardly keep on our feet. The wind took our breath away alarmingly. Wires were coming down. The wind screamed. We struggled on to George and Minnie Hawthorne's. Of course she let us in! What an hour and half that was! We sat in the kitchen and felt the floor boards bulge as I kept a close watch on the kerosene heater that was burning there to keep us warm. By about 5 o'clock the wind had subsided. We went out. What a sight! The cemetery across the road was strewn with trees and wires. Telephone poles were leaning at all angles. As we struggled up the hill to our house, Dick ran to meet us and to report. After shutting up the barn, Dad and he had gone to the house. Slate from the barn roof hurtled across the road and cut out pieces of window frames just like an ax. Dad and the boys had stuffed towels into apertures and nailed scatter rugs over window frames. The bulkhead doors were being sucked open and then shut by the terrific suction. The family filled the big tub with coal and set it on the doors to hold them down. After the storm they saw that both chimneys were gone. The roof of the ell, lifted in one piece, had been deposited over by the "Long House." The barn roof was partly gone and many slates from the house, too.

At Bay Road Jack's house and barn had escaped major damage but the brooder houses with young stock were tumbled all over the place and into the gully. More serious, our incubator was getting cold; no electric current. We packed all the eggs in crates and drove uptown to an empty machine at Mass. State College, never dreaming it would be a 40% hatch! We were without current for two weeks but the college had its own auxiliary current. Telephones were out a full week. Hurricanes were unheard of in our part of the country at that time so we had had no warning at all.

The Year of 1943 - Rationing

Our first winter in Florida was the year of 1943 and '44 at Lakeland where Ruth Anne, our seventh child, attended school as a freshman. We rented and dad began to improve from his arthritis. That was during gas rationing. We put up our car after our arrival in October and used it only on special occasions. After the first of the year we saved up our coupons to use later for going home and timed our leaving so as to get the benefit of the second quarter's allowance. We started home traveling at 35 to 40 miles an hour, which was the rate most economical on gas consumption.

We also had tire trouble in Walterboro, N.C. and searched out the Ration Board there. I had to 'phone Mr. Chas. Miller of the Ration Board in Amherst to ask him to wire the board in Walterboro, N.C., of our entitlement to a new tire. He authorized them to give us one. When we reached Far View Farm our last coupon was gone and we had half a tank of gas left. We had made it!

Winter Fun in So. Amherst

Many were the good times we had in winter. With lots of snow and freezing weather, coasting was wonderful. Cousin Will Warren who was connected with the Flexible Flyer sled firm kept us generously supplied with sleds. We had his daughter over from Mt. Holyoke college for sliding parties. Often the children invited their teachers down for an evening. I usually had a big kettle of fat on the stove and would fry doughnuts and serve cocoa to them as they came in with their faces scarlet from their speedy rides through the frosty air and out of breath from the long walk from way down back of the barn where they terminated their rides after starting up on top of Atkins' hill. This did as much as any P.T.A. meeting in getting parents and teachers acquainted with each other. (We always encouraged our children to bring their friends home for refreshments after dances, I remember.)[1] Some recall with nostalgia the skating on the little pond on Potwine Lane, called "Schoonsons" and watching for the red blanket I would hang outside the upstairs hall window when it was time to come home. Many were the happy Christmas eves, singing carols from a sleigh as we all rode around the neighborhood. Ted recalls once playing the Sousa Horn and trumpet with Phil Stedman from the belfry of our church.

[1]Editor: We are grateful for this family that added so much to the life and goodness of South Amherst, and to Mrs. Schoonmaker's son John for permission to excerpt some of his mother's recollections. None of the Schoonmakers live in So. Amherst today; most will retire to the state of North Carolina and so get together at times in the future.



Pillow inside a patterned cotton fabric from a grain bag of Depression days. Homemakers used the attractive patterns for making aprons, wash dresses, curtains, etc. (Cloth from Velma Peterson, Madison) (F.I. Elliott picture)

REMINISCENSES BY ERNEST WHITCOMB

South Amherst's Last Blacksmith

August 1, 1957

Marjorie Atkins Elliott

The door to the blacksmith shop was pushed back to let in the morning sunshine. My mother and I stepped inside. There amid the accoutrements of bygone age stood the man we wished to see, the blacksmith of South Amherst, Ernest E. Whitcomb. He turned from the anvil to greet us and if he was surprised at our visit, was too polite to show it. We had seen the open door, we explained, and hoped he could give us some information on the history of the shop and the men who had shod the teams of South Amherst through the past.

What names did he recall of the blacksmiths who had worked here prior to his coming in 1927? Together he and mother reminisced. About fifty years ago a J. W. Bethune was the first blacksmith, succeeded shortly by Myron Hicks. A Mr. Murray was blacksmith during this same period and then came Tom Palmer. I wrote down the names. (Mr. Bert Shaw, a well known blacksmith of Belchertown and Leverett believed Palmer served around 1910. Mr. Shaw had followed Palmer as an apprentice to the blacksmith of Belchertown, Herbert Curtis.) Who then followed Palmer? Mr. Whitcomb and mother decided that around 1923 Bill Zink was blacksmith. (Win Shumway later gave the names of two more blacksmiths after Palmer, those of O'Neil and Simard.) These were mere names to me but later inquiry revealed that a standard supporting a piece of garden furniture on the lawn of James Tufts, formerly of Middle Street, South Amherst, is a frame made by Mr. Zink for a small grindstone a half century ago; and Bert Shaw still uses a wrench he bought from Zink, a real craftsman.

In these days before the first World War, South Amherst was referred to as "a good stand." It was a prosperous community and a blacksmith did a lot of business there. Even so, a man could lose all he owned by being out-smarted by a shrewd horse trader. That was how Palmer lost his business, wrote Mr. Shaw, "including the anvil!"

Other men worked at the smithy for short periods of time. James Tufts and Win Shumway remember Pop Leetes, a tall, lanky man who was aided by his kid brother, nicknamed Rip Van Winkle, because of his white beard but also referred to as Uncle Gilbert.

Some of the teamsters could in an emergency outdo the professed blacksmith. Mr. Tufts recounts, Bartholomew McNamara used to take the handsome Barton team of Middle Street over to the shop and with a bow to the incumbent smith, take up the tools at hand and shoe the horses himself. "Mac knew more about horses than any of the rest of us would ever know, and he seemed actually to speak to them in their special brogue with a good Killarney accent. If a horse 'got cast,' was balky, or just held his head down with the telltale glazed eye, we called Mac. A few words whispered in the animal's ear usually righted the situation and when Mac left he would often prescribe his favorite remedy, with his pragmatic explanation: "Give him a pint of raw linseed oil . . . If he be a sick horse it'll fix him, and if he be a well horse he'll get over it."

There was also a small shop we learned from Win Shumway, built by his grandfather, Dwight Shumway. This was located in the back yard along the little private road running from Middle Street across to South East Street. Win and Carl Dickinson remember Dwight well, also. Carl writes, "Dwight Shumway did a lot of repair work on wagons and sleds, besides being a very good handy man. He had a fiery temper,



Bert Shaw, 1894-1973 well known Belchertown and Leverett blacksmith and iron craftsman, at Sturbridge. In mid 50's. (Steven Puffer)

never hesitated to express his opinion of the job when someone brought a rather decrepit wagon to be restored to active service. It was the usual custom for a customer to peek into the shop to see if it was safe to go any further. I remember once when I had broken my air rifle I thought I would go to him to get it fixed. I peeked in through a knot hole in the door, and saw in huge letters on the opposite wall the legend "Pay as you go or don't go; trust is dead." As I had no finances with me at the time, I decided to postpone the repair job until I could get some money from my father. So then I returned to Mr. Shumway's shop, found him feeling fairly cheerful, and showed him the air gun. He had never seen one like it, was much interested in it, fixed it okay and would not charge a cent. All my life I have remembered his motto, and it has kept me out of debt a great many times. Many years later I was in South Amherst and ran across Mr. Shumway in the store where he was living with his daughter, Mrs. Herbert Dickinson. I spoke to him and reminded him of the time he repaired my armament and he seemed to be pleased that I remembered. Around 1902 Dwight's son, Wilbur, (father of Win) was doing business there, shoeing horses of the area."

As the business of horse shoeing dwindled there came the day when the shop was unoccupied, the anvil still and the door locked. Teams were shod upstreet.

Then Ernest Whitcomb appeared around 1927 and tended the shop owned then by W. H. Atkins. Later Mr. Whitcomb bought the shop (and house) and he is still there today. For many years the teams that hauled ice cut from Atkins' pond on Depot Road to the icehouses in South Amherst in winter, and hay from the fields to the barns in summer or over the Notch to Holyoke in the following "slack season," were shod twice a year by Whitcomb. There were still some saddle horses to shoe notably those owned by Mrs. Gage on Shays Street, and some driving horses, but each year they decreased in number. It came to be when we children heard the rhythmical clip-clop of an approaching horse and buggy we

hurried to the window to look out, and see who it was. Sometimes the Kentfields; finally it was only Cecil Jewett who drove up South East Street in a buggy behind his trotting horse.

Mr. Whitcomb bought the house and shop in 1929. Today past 70 years, he is not averse to walking up to the old shop



Using a buggy, not a sleigh, on a snowy day in 1925. "Allie Bird" driven by Ned Puffer wearing a buffalo skin coat; a common style then. (Steven Puffer)

that settles against the lilac bush with a bit of a slump, to shoe Sandy Moon's Welch pony, or to weld a piece of ironwork.(1) He can remember the time when farmers hurried their teams up the road in the early winter morning to be the first in line; there was one day when he shod a total of twelve horses! "Those were the days," he said, "when a horse was shod at a dollar and a quarter for a set of new shoes (4) that included 'kickers' and all, no matter how long it took. Today, if you find a blacksmith, or he finds you, the price is seven to eight for saddle horses and ten or more for work horses."

Courteously Mr. Whitcomb let the piece of redhot iron grow cold and pulled objects down from the rafters or out of a forgotten pile of earlier needs, to answer our questions. Overhead hung rows of horseshoes, in apparently as many sizes as a woman's shoe. "We had to have everything," said Mr. Whitcomb. "Used to make the shoe itself but of late we have bought them in sizes and shape them to fit. A keg of shoes costs about $30 today; in 1910 the same amount could be had for $3. A blacksmith uses or did use about nine sizes, from 00 to No. 7, for ponies to horses weighing 1600." He also stocked special shoes for lame feet, for a horse's corn or "spreading feet." These were called bar shoes. Calk shoes, separate shoes with spurs fastened to the sole of a shoe to prevent slipping, were nailed to the horses' hooves in winter.



Everett Atwood and team of Atkins' draft horses in front of incomplete barn. Grindstone under the window of former house moved back to become horse stable and shop of new barn addition. Wagon in background. Circa 1910. (Atkins family)

Neither mother nor Mr. Whitcomb was sure about the first smithies in South Amherst but way back there had been a blacksmith only a little south of the parsonage on the west side; after the shop run by Rose (at the foot of today's Bob Collins' property) had burned down, another shop had been moved to the opposite side of the road in 1900 from Bay Road by Charles Shaw. It had stood south of Bay Road, near George MacIntire's greenhouse in the "dip." Fred Adams vouched for that bit of history; a Mr. Chapin had been blacksmith down there. The present South East Street site is referred to as on "the Hunt lot" and an 1869 Amherst Directory lists a George Hunt as South Amherst blacksmith. We know from Claude Walker's memoirs that a Mrs. Hunt's fence was south of the parsonage.(2) It may have extended south through the "dip." The same Directory of Amherst lists a Joshua Latham as blacksmith on Church Street, the earlier name for South East Street. Only research can straighten out this assortment.

The afternoon was waning. We moved to the planked door past a string of sleigh bells left there some earlier day, and saying goodbye returned to the present, an era of motorized transport not needing care for draft horses shod twice a year at the local blacksmith in South Amherst.

Background Information by the Editor

1. Mr. Ernest E. Whitcomb died in 1968; the shop was razed in 1966.
2. Walker, Claude, manuscript in Jones library, "A Minister's Boy." (He was son of Rev. Chas. Walker, pastor 1876 to 1879 and 1881 to 1886 at South Congregational Church.) Permission granted.
3. List of blacksmiths (recalled by Mrs. W.H. Atkins, Ernest Whitcomb and Bert Shaw), at smithy "on the Hunt lot" across from Win Shumway's:
   About 1887 – J.W. Bethune, Myron Hicks, Mr. Murray.
   About 1910 – Tom Palmer (O'Neil and Simard)
   About 1923 – Bill Zink (Pop Leetes)
   Other blacksmiths: "Daddy" Rose, smithy just north; Chapin, blacksmith at site on Bay Road, burned out 1895; John Bliss up So. East Street.



The last blacksmith shop in Amherst, standing just north and west of Win Shumway's — a landmark that should have been preserved. This was moved here by Chas. Shaw from site near MacIntire's on Bay Road at turn of century. Razed in 1966. Ernest Whitcomb last blacksmith. (Naomi Atkins)

Facing the Common

THE SOUTH AMHERST POOR FARM 1838-1914

Scenes (1885-1901) recalled by Carl Dickinson
son of warden Henry Dickinson
Amherst Record
by Marjorie Atkins Elliott
April 25, 1957

Like a group of well-established ladies at a tea, the white colonial-styled houses around the South Amherst common settle back on their green lawns. Content with the state of their preservation and assured that they look very well indeed, they preside over the doings on the Common, ignoring the cars and admiring the trees.

But once it was not like this. In 1825 the varied sounds of manufacturing filled the air. The businesses of the villages were centered here. Now the hubbub has moved up or down the road, the Common has an air of repose and serenity quite unlike that in the past.

According to Carpenter and Morehouse's **History of Amherst**, a carriage manufacturing shop of Lyman Knowles faced the Green in 1827. Jonathan Warner had another shop near by. A general store on the southwest corner provided the villagers with merchandise and news. In 1841 a post office was established in the same building, with deliveries on alternate days. Across the street, south east from the store, was a well-patronized tavern operated by an Ansel Percival in 1825. At the crest of Shays Street was another tavern, if you wished a choice. Just south of the present schoolhouse stood a grey schoolhouse, two stories high and long since gone. Visible south and across from the store, was a distillery. A brickmaking factory was in operation down Middle Street, between Roland Coe's and Tufts'. Across the dip, on the east side of South East Street, in 1869 known more colorfully as Church Street, was the frequented blacksmith shop of the popular W.B. Rose. The lovely Congretational church, modeled after a Congregational church in Greenwich, Mass., became an active part of the village scene in 1824. It alone, of all these mentioned, still remains true to the purpose for which it was constructed.

Nor was the Common always so lovely. Not until the Village Improvement Society was organized in 1883 was the north end of the Common graded and seeded down to grass. In 1889 a number of trees were set out upon the Common. The beauty of the Green today (also known as Fiddler's Green) is due largely to the foresight and labor of the members of this society.

There was one other "business" in operation in 1838 (at the northeast corner of the Common), that has also passed with time. The property of Edward J. Kaniecki (in 1957) bordering South East Street and the Depot Road, was owned by the town and served as a home for the indigent from 1838 to 1914. It was called the Town Farm, or more often the Poor Farm. It was the secret dread of every adult that adverse circumstances might someday place him in the Poor Farm.

Back in 1778 the town voted to build an almshouse for its poor, to be situated at Clark's Mill, Mill Valley. This was not carried out, however, and fifty years elapsed. Then this property owned by Medad Vinton of South Amherst was purchased for the amount of $3,636. It was paid for out of surplus revenue. That term falls unfamiliarly upon our ears today. The surplus revenues from which payment was made, according to Carpenter and Morehouse, was a part of the sum received by Amherst, in common with other towns from the state government. "The United States Government, finding in the 1830's that it had a surplus in the treasury, decided to divide it among the several states. Massachusetts divided it among the towns and cities." In 1839 the buildings of the almshouse were repaired and stock and farm implements purchased from the same "surplus revenue." Wardens of the town farm were engaged much after the fashion by which the collection of taxes was made, to the lowest bidder. During the year 1847 the number of persons supported or relieved was 25; expense of paupers above receipts of the farm was $747.84. In 1854 average number of persons supported at the almshouse was 8; average weekly cost of supporting each pauper at almshouse 75 cents; number supported outside almshouse 35; average weekly cost of supporting each pauper outside the almshouse $1.07; warden's salary $230.

During the year 1864 the expense for paupers was greater than any preceding year, on account of the support of 25 persons afflicted with smallpox, which cost the town $692.48.

We learn further from Carpenter and Morehouse that a fire started by one of the inmates in 1882 burned down the house. It was rebuilt the same year with two wings. This house, minus the north wing, still stands today.

Many will remember the north wing which was razed in the 1920s. I used to look at it from the grade school nearby and wonder about the long corridor that ran the length of the wing. Finally I went across to the building, then owned by the Dana Rosebrooks and asked Mrs. Rosebrook if I might go up into that ell. She expressed surprise at my wish, as well she might, and explained it was just an unused portion on the



The Town Farm in 1895 when Henry Dickinson was in charge. Left wing removed in the 1930's. L. to r.: Mrs. Bolter, Mrs. Henry Dickinson, Henry and his son Carl Dickinson with the team. (Carl worked as ticket agent at the railroad station on Depot Road until 1901 when he moved to California.) (Clara Dwight)



The Town Farm buildings today, sold in 1914, owned by Edward Kaniecki today. (H. McChesney)

building. But she did go up with me. I think I was a little disappointed. It was just a long hall with a window at the north end, and empty rooms with torn paper shades hanging at the windows. If I had known any of the tales that Carl Dickinson, son of warden Henry Dickinson, has since told me, I would have felt very differently.

Carl Dickinson's father, Henry, was engaged as warden at the Town Poor Farm about 1885; the Town Farm was the home of the Dickinson family for the next 15 years by which time Carl had grown up and left (1901) to seek his fortune in the West. The farm could not have been an easy assignment since many of the inmates were more than a little undependable. Mrs. Dickinson had five of her own children to raise! I quote from Carl's letter:

Henry Dickinson, son of Waitstill Dickinson, Deacon, warden of the Town Farm, 1885-1900, and father of Carl. (Mrs. John Stene)





Mrs. Henry Dickinson, probable date of marriage, 1868, who cared for the inmates of the Town Farm for 15 years, meanwhile raising five of her own. (Mrs. John Stene)

"I never realized in the old days how my mother used to work to keep things going, making all the bread for that houseful, besides doing all the cooking. Aside from the dishwashing she could get very little work out of the inmates.

"I have one recollection of when my three sisters and my brother and I all had the measles and were all stuck in beds set up in the front room, and Mrs. Geo. Dwight sent up all her available daughters to stay with us awhile so they could catch the measles and get it over with. Think that custom has become obsolete.

"I think the top salary my father received as warden was $450 a year and family maintenance, but he got less than that when we first went there. We usually had ten or fifteen cows to milk, and the cream was sold to the creamery.

"I was anxious as a kid to learn the noble art of extracting milk from cows but after practicing it awhile I sure wished I'd never acquired that skill. As I grew old enough to drive a team, it was one of my duties whenever we had a snowstorm, to take the snowplow and plow out paths for everyone around the Common, especially for the church and parsonage, so no one would have any excuse for playing hooky from church services.

"After we lived there three or four years the oxen were dispensed with and we had a two-horse team, and even got a new buggy and sleigh. I spent many, many long hours buck sawing wood, as that was our principal fuel, except that in later years we burned coal in the two furnaces. The wood we



L. to R.: Clara Dwight, Carl "Dick" Dickinson, and Florence Dwight. Carl Dickinson was the youngest son of Warden Henry Dickinson, and contributed by letter most of the material in this article. The two Dwight women were daughters of Mrs. George Dwight. Picture taken by Nina Dickinson, wife of Carl, on one of their trips east from California in early 40's. A manuscript of recollections by Clara Dwight is now in the Munson Library as is Carl's manuscript of later years as railroad telegrapher at scores of railroad outposts in the west. (Nina Dickinson)

got from the swamp lot, and also from a lot owned by the town on the mountain, not far from the Moriarty place today, Buuzala on Bay Road."

Mr. George Howard was warden at the town farm before the Dickinsons. His daughter, Alice Howard, now of 815 Main Street, recalls the fire that burned the original house, barn and sheds in 1881. The shed was rebuilt about 1887 or 1888 by Edwin Marsh, a carpenter and the lamplighter of the village.

When the Dickinsons arrived, the inmates numbered six or seven.

Mary Hawley who was a deaf-mute, but could "screech like blazes whenever she got mad at the moon," writes Carl, was one well remembered by youngsters of the village. Even to day Mabel Harris recalls the sounds she heard from that north wing of the building when, in company with her father, Edwin Marsh, and sister, she walked past, north to the railroad tracks on upper East Street thence into Amherst, to hear an evening lecture! They walked, she said, to spare the horse! More than one young person must have dreaded going by the almshouse on a moonlit night.

Carl Dickinson vividly recalls the other folk who through necessity had come to the town farm to live. "There was Norman Smith, a man who evidently had had some education but whose mind seemed to be considerably clouded. He spent a lot of time walking back and forth on Logtown Road (Depot Road) with his hands behind him and never spoke unless spoken to first. Old Pat Shea was there, and as I remember he seemed to be perfectly contented if he didn't run out of smoking tobacco. But sometimes he would get heart burn and when not immediately relieved by a dose of baking soda, he would bring out a silver dollar, his entire capital, and offer it to my father, if he would shoot him. Father was always too busy to bother with a small job like that. One time Shea asked Hiram Moody who was helping us with the haying, "Will you shoot me for a dollar?" Hiram replied, "I'll shoot you like a skunk." As far as is known, that was the last time that Shea wanted to be shot. He died at the age of 93, and we missed him quite a lot as he was always cheerful and had a lot of Irish wit.

"Aunt Sally was one of the oldest ones there; I can't think of her last name. She had the first false teeth I'd ever seen and

we kids used to watch her take them out. That operation is not such a novelty to me now.

"Mrs. Kellogg was another old standby. She was harmlessly insane, wouldn't eat anything unless she could steal it; never talked to anyone, and her principal expression was 'Shut your head — willful murder.' Many a time when I was a kid and had occasion to walk down the long dark hall in the ell part, I'd hear that whispered remark right behind me and it never failed to expedite my movements somewhat . . . When the apples were ripe she would climb out the window on the north side of the ell, and scurry around the orchard filling her pockets with the fruit. When she died mother discovered a petticoat she had always worn, which had only thirty pockets in it. I've a hunch that's the pocket record, at least for South Amherst.

"The two north rooms in the ell were occuppied by Harriet Williams and Bridget Deignan, both cripples, Harriet on a cane and Bridget on crutches. Most of their time was spent quarreling. When Harriet passed away Bridget was heartbroken — didn't have anyone to scrap with. She had of necessity a pretty lonesome existence. A few years before she died her estranged husband showed up but he would have nothing to do with her. He was there two or three years when it was discovered he was a veteran of the Mexican war and entitled to a pension of twelve dollars a month, so he pulled out and got Mrs. Elmer (who lived in the proximity of the later known King house) to board him for that amount. That was about the time the new blacksmith was operating and as I remember the blacksmith also boarded at Mrs. Elmer's.

"Another intimate of the town farm was Sophia Randolph . . . She was chief dishwasher for a number of years . . . It was one of our favorite pastimes to pour some vinegar into a teacup and ask her if she didn't want a little tea that was left. She always fell for it, but never got mad.

"A Mr. Hawley, father of the Mary I mentioned, was also there. He was father of ten children, five of whom were deaf and dumb and several of the others didn't have all their marbles. When he died, two of his sons showed up and got into a fight over his estate which consisted of a harmonica and a pair of suspenders. I remember the scrap but can't recollect who got which."

Possibly the inmates at the Amherst town farm were treated with more humanity than in most such places, for Deacon Henry Dickinson and his wife are described today by people who knew them — the Pomeroys, Henry Wentworth, the Dwights, Mrs. Atkins — as a couple held in high regard by the community for their kind and Christian treatment of their charges. I wrote to Carl Dickinson and told him that this was the reputation his parents still had in South Amherst and he responded with the remark that, "They couldn't have been otherwise as that was the way they were built. Both of them took the Golden Rule very seriously. If mother had not had a wonderful constitution she couldn't have stood the work there. When she was 75 I asked her if she had ever had a headache, and she said never that she knew of. Guess she never had time for it."

Of this we can be sure. Life in an almshouse would be one part of the "good old days" that we would not want back. It was, in fact, an underlying fear of most people as they aged, that they would end up in the "poor house."

In 1914 the town decided to provide for its poor in some other way than by the method of the past 50 years. The farm buildings and equipment were put up for auction the next spring.

So a property, once tilled by a Medad Vinton and sold to the town in 1838, reverted to private hands in 1915, and folk are fast forgetting that it once served as the town farm for the indigent of Amherst.

Footnotes

1. Tenure of last wardens: Henry C. Dickinson, 1885-1900; Elmer Smith, 1900-1906; Fred Young, 1907-10mos.; Carl Hammond, 1908-1910; Henry Wentworth, 1911-1912; Charles Buell, 1912-1913; John Haynes, 1913-1914; sale of farm, and welfare established.

2. Henry Dickinson, son of Waitstill, next moved to old family farm. Then (with or without brother, Dan) owned the later Bill Williams' place which was sold to Chas. H. Shaw about 1954. Howlett said Dan was a fine farmer. Another report speaks of sale of the Capt. Enos Dickinson's place (later Cecil Jewett's), and of all the antiques discarded. At the time of the sale the Capt. Enos house was apparently owned by the son(s) of Waitstill. More history to search out!

3. Carl remembers his grandmother at the ancestral home on Shay Street saying the most important day of her life was seeing Gen. Lafayette on his farewell visit to Amherst ride past the house. Carl thinks around 1825.

4. At an auction of the Poor Farm a captain's chair was sold to Mrs. Hendricks of West Street which had formerly belonged to the Morell house that was set afire and burned in 1900. See account page 104 in this book.

5. Wm. J. Chaffee bought the Town Farm in 1915; it was then sold to Rosebrook and H. Darling in 1915. Benjamin Streyeski operated it about a year. Wm Chaffee again owned it in 1930 and deeded it to sons, Francis and Albie, 1942. In 1954 Edward Kaniecki became owner. Today, 1985, the Sawmill Stud Farm operates it as a horse farm. The Kanieckis still live at the house but their lower acreage plus Atkins' lower Morell farm meadows are owned by a corporation known as the Saw Mill Farm. Lawrence Slobody of 27 Stagecoach Road is the owner. Two sons assist and raise race horses — standard breds and thoroughbreds.



In 1985, Dr. Lawrence Slobody of Stagecoach Road owns the "flats," excluding the house and barn, of the former Town Farm, breeding Standardbred and Thoroughbred horses. (M.A. Elliott)

INTERESTING HISTORY OF POMEROY LANE

Amherst Record
July, 1956
by Marjorie Atkins Elliott

Pomeroy Lane is a young road compared with its sister road, Potwine Lane. In early times it was just a cart-road, referred to as "the road to the meeting house," the South Congregational church. Frank Pomeroy's uncle, David Pomeroy, owned all the south side of the road. In 1874 Frank erected a house on the north side (near Plum Brook) of Middle Street, which he had purchased from a Merrick on West street, and it was from this residence the street acquired its name.

The Pomeroy house with its wide veranda was for years the only dwelling on the lane and is today the home of two Pomeroys, the Misses Lena and Mary. From them we learned much of the past history along the road.

Always straight and direct, its straightness alone would not have brought Lena's father home on one occasion to safety. When the now historic blizzard of 1888 began, Mr. Pomeroy walked up the lane to escort his young daughter home from her work at Merrick's store. Upon reaching the store, he decided not to risk her strength in the mounting drifts and made arrangements for her to spend the night across the street at Will Smith's home, now the Dwight house. (Lena had had both measles and scarlet fever three months before.) He, of course, proceeded to return on foot to his family a half-mile down the road. It was two days before Lena had word of her father. The continuing blizzard completely cut off all communication until ox teams were able to break open the roads. Her father had reached home exhausted and claimed he owed his life to one thing, the Virginia rail fence that bordered the length of the road. By keeping one hand on its rails he was able literally to feel his way down the road to the house that was absolutely invisible ahead.

In the late 1800's Pomeroy Lane was lighted at night by kerosene lamps. Reuben Pomeroy recalls seeing Edward Marsh go down the road at dusk with his can of kerosene, cloths for cleaning and small stepladder to tend the lamps. Later when electric lights were installed, apparently Pomeroy Lane was the first road in South Amherst to have them installed on its entire length.

Pomeroy was always a straight road but not always firm. In spring its clay foundation became a bottomless mire. (That same clay deposit east of Plum Brook between the Barton and Tufts' property was deep enough to attract a brickyard there. James Tufts says Frank Pomeroy could recall the road that led from the brickyard out onto Pomeroy Lane.) There are various tales told of muddy Pomeroy Lane. One woman today remembers her high school girlfriend losing her rubbers in the mud one fall; and more remarkably, seeing these same rubbers rise to the surface the next spring. Often a horse struggled through mud up to its knees; as often a team of horses was engaged to pull a helpless auto back to safety on West street.

So it was with great joy in 1921 that the people of South Amherst received town approval for their section of the road from Pomeroy's house to West street. The amount allocated for the 1,000 feet was $1,000. Local teamsters and workers did the job. Mary Pomeroy recalls a Mr. Davis of Northampton was engineer. W. H. Atkins, farmer and selectman, pitched in with the others to lay "a firm foundation." The diary he kept says, "Started work on Pomeroy Road," October 18, 1921. And on November 8, 1921. "Finished west of Pomeroys, 1350 feet for $940.00, 341 loads of gravel, 395 loads of stone."

One wonders who the men were who moved this prodigious amount of stone and gravel with only the horse, wagon and dump cart for help. In the same diary were the names of Dave Hawthorne and Win Cowles. From them came other details. Dave had loaded rock in back of Pomeroys, from the walls built there by early settlers. Win Cowles recalled the stone was laid one foot deep and 12 feet wide, and gave us the names of some of the other workmen. Cliff Tiffany recalled that Everett Atwood of Pelham was my father's teamster then! And Mr. Atwood was able to give the names of five of the six teamsters who at $1 a load hauled first stone, then gravel. Hubert Barton's team was driven by Mac McNamara; Charlie Stiles' team, Edgar Hutchings' team and Henry Stowell's were also used. This made five teams, but the diary says six. Maybe the "ghost team" will still be accounted for.

Other workers' names come to light. Cowles says George Dwight and Robert Thompson (who lived where the Gomans now reside) were the men responsible for leveling the stone as it was dumped into the road. If the stone was too big, they dug the hole deeper. Henry Juckett, Cliff Tiffany, Joe Messier, Ernest Hartwell from the West street were other workers. Stone walls that had begun to crumble and fall into the mowing lots were loaded from the Morell farm, Shaw's and Howland's (south of Shay's street), Pomeroy's, Markert's on West street, and Whitcomb's — 395 loads, 6 teams, 12 days.



The Misses Mary and Lena Pomeroy (left to right), who occupy the homestead built by their father Frank and for which Pomeroy Lane received its name, enjoy the sun on the wide veranda of the charming 82-year-old home. (In 1985, house was 111 years old . . . The family of 11 children had previously occupied the present Hutchings' house.)

Then there was gravel. Mr. Cowles recalled some of it had come from the land between Win Shumway and George Holt's homes (the former Marsh place). Today only a bank between the two properties indicates there was once a hill of gravel there. Mr. Atwood remembered the other gravel pit used was across from Loren Bigelow's on Shays street near the high tension wires.

The stone had been donated. Apparently the farmers did not feel the beauty of a stone wall, especially a crumbling wall, justified preservation, and they were only too glad to give it to a good cause. It was a time for general "housecleaning." The gravel cost something less than $25 in all.

I can recall my father's feeling of satisfaction when the road was built. There was a road whose foundation would hold. And he was right. Resurfaced the entire length in 1929 by the town with the aid of county and state funds, the earlier stone foundation was not disturbed.

Even after the road had a good foundation, it was rather cheerless. To be sure, Mrs. Mary Milk, mother-in-law of H. C.

Barton, had sent to her homeland in Dakota for some trees which were set out in 1915 by Mr. Barton and Mr. McNamara. But they grew slowly and during the years my generation walked home from school, they did not cast shade over our hot backs. Today the road has an abundance of shade for motorist and pedestrian.

Mary Pomeroy tells of Loomis Merrick having set out trees on the north side of the lane west of Pomeroy's. But the telephone age arrived and the telephone company, notwithstanding his protests, cut down his beloved row of native pine, oak and chestnut. So great was his indignation, the company set out another row of trees, the slim poplar, a little farther back from the road to accommodate progress. They are there today.

But few walk today. In the 30's we sometimes met Rev. and Mrs. Ebenezer Francis strolling down the hill of Pomeroy Lane on a summer evening. At first we would offer a ride but all South Amherst came to realize that the minister and his wife were out for a walk. We'd feel a touch of envy at their use of leisure and limb and continue on helplessly in our automobile.

We youngsters walked only as a necessity. High schoolers walked to West street every day. I was the first in the group up South East street, and, like a rolling snowball, the cluster of walkers grew — Schoonmakers, Hawthornes, etc., receiving its most vigorous augmentation at Schoonmakers. It was not just their number or their articulate enjoyment of life — it was the instruments. At one time each of them played an instrument, and that meant carrying instruments every Thursday for orchestra rehearsal. Foolishly it seems now, we played also for Monday morning assembly. That meant carrying our instruments a total of four miles each Monday for perhaps four minutes playing time! I can see and hear Bob Schoonmaker yet, buffeted by those cold winter winds as we came around the Common and started down Pomeroy Lane, due west. He'd duck his head, clutch his clarinet with one hand and taking a firmer hold on his sister's big 'cello which he was carrying, he'd yell back, "I chose a clarinet but I can't win. Esther chooses 'cello!" He made the best of it though, using the 'cello as a windbreaker, trying to shield his ample frame behind it.

Those days soon passed and, according to Chauncey Simmons, the trolley made its last run to Amherst with high school students in the spring of 1932. The little station we shivered in as we waited on West street was abandoned. On a 4th of July it was "accidently" tipped upside down. Thereafter it took a short trip to Earl Blair's farm next door where it now stands, contented with its conversion into a corncrib.

Pomeroy Lane Remains

Fifteen, not two houses, line the road in 1956, a few of them located west of Pomeroy's on a field owned by W.R. Brown and leveled for baseball games in the middle 20's. For a period of perhaps three years the South Amherst Athletic Association met there, practised and played. Cliff Tiffany was one of the players, so were George and Amos Holt, Dave Hawthorne, George Lombard, Wesley Wentworth, Archie Sanders, Ray Shaw, Peter Rosswell of Mill Valley. C.W. Miller was manager; Chas. King referee. Those were the days before TV. What could be pleasanter than loading the family car after supper and having your family and friends cheer your attempted home runs? On a hot night running boards were used for outdoor seats. It was perhaps a prerunner for the entertainment offered by today's drive-in theater. But after 1927 the club broke up and the baseball field was forgotten. A later group shifted to the area owned by W.H. Atkins north of the church, the old Morell farm.

Until 1940 Miss Mary Pomeroy walked daily to the corner of West street for mail. At that time she presented a petition for rural free delivery for the three householders on the lane and presented in her petition that the other residences would be established on the lane in the future. Her petition was granted. Her prediction proved true.

Today, 16 years later, there are 15 mailboxes on the other side of the lane.

A road is many things to many people; (only in traveling does it become a part of one's life). Pomeroy Lane has a permanent place in the memories of all those who have lived in South Amherst.

The ghost team referred to in last week's article on Pomeroy Lane is accounted for!

Harold Wentworth of S. East street telephoned Thursday that he was the missing teamster, No. 6. It is hard to see how he was overlooked as at the time of the road work in 1921 his property adjoined Mr. Atkins'.

He drove a pair of "greys," he said, and recollected an incident that explains how 1,350 feet of stone and gravel was laid in less than three weeks. "I distinctly remember," he said, "one morning at the gravel pit. It was just seven and there were four loads of gravel all ready to go." But on the books the work day ran from seven to five. This was the kind of enthusiastic support the South Amherst men gave the project.

We learn of another property, Bates' on S. East street, that also contributed stone. And Herbert Hutchings tells us an incident his father told him, that the stone wall removed from Judge Howland's land along Shays street, had been built earlier of "imported" stone. It seems the earlier owner, Parnell Munson, wanted a stone wall there, perhaps to frame his view of the Range, so paid to have stone hauled in and a wall erected.(1) It must have struck the Yankees of that day as the height of spendthriftness! Doubtless it caused some comment in 1921 as workers moved the stone down the hill to join the humbler native rocks in a common roadbed.

However, Mr. Munson was a man of means and could afford it. We are indebted to him and his wife today for the lovely library facing our Common. After his death his widow left $30,000 for a memorial library. Through the efforts of W. H. Atkins, the town, since it had the Jones Library, agreed to place this library in the village in which the Munsons had lived. Today it stands just below the rock ledges where they made their home.

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1. Clara Dwight's manuscript, Munson Memorial Library.

Standing here l. to r.: Helen Dwight, Myra Dwight Burt, and Mrs. George (Marian Cook) Dwight.

TONTEEN HOUSE
M. A. Elliott

The Tonteen House of South Amherst on Middle Street at the turn of the century. Tonteen means "benefits to the last survivor." No one knows it application to this house. Horace Douglas, brother to Emeline Elmer, lived there. He was a butcher, according to a Directory of 1869.

The Dwight sisters claim this house was remodeled from time to time to become the house it is today. They stand left to right: Helen Dwight, Myra Dwight and Mrs. George (Marian Cook) Dwight, mother. Note upstairs window have twelve panes.

Owners preceding the present, as listed by Myra and Clara were:

Henry Thayer who sold it to Mrs. Emeline Wright Elmer. Father Dwight, Asahel, who bought it Emeline. (No one recalls who altered the roof.) The Dwights sold it to the Tatros who put on the sun porch. Tatros sold it to the Howletts; Howletts sold it to Howard Atkins; he built on a room off the kitchen, and sold the house to Archie and Jemima French; the Frenches to Alan Torrey, who after leaving built a large glass-windowed home on east side of South East Street, between the MacLeod's two houses — 1/8 of a mile away!



The same house today. (McChesney, 1972)



A beautiful watercolor painting of the Hutchings barn of 1830 by Carl Schmalz, Jr. of Pelham, MA. The shading of the old boards of the Pomeroy built barn is remarkable. (Ell added by Frank Pomeroy's father.) In 1970 the building was torn down — houses have gone up instead. The barn faced a flight of steps up the west bank to the old Hutchings (Pomeroy) house. (H. Hutchings)

THE HISTORICAL WORTH OF A BARN

"Going, Going, Gone - the Barns of Old Amherst"
Amherst Record 1978
by Marjorie A. Elliott

When I returned to Amherst the spring of 1972, I realized that unless the Amherst Historical Society intervenes we are about to lose all our ancient barns in South Amherst, the ones that date back to 1830. In South Amherst every old house of white clapboard or brick once had its accompanying barn. Through recent years the small farmer has turned to other livelihoods. Real estate offers a price his yearly income never matched. Inevitably the 150 year old weathered barns we took for granted are being removed to make another building lot.

It was Herbert Hutchings' barn that was torn down in 1972, an unpainted barn (although there was a bit of red under the peak), more than 150 years old, facing the west side of South East Street that was cool with shadows from ancient maples on the west bank. The barn and the trees made a tunnel of shade in summer. As I visited in Harriet's and Herbert's living room, we talked about barns.



Most of the early 1830 So. Amherst barns were joined together by the builders pounding wooden pegs in place of nails, sometimes called "trunnels" (tree nails) into auger-drilled holes as pictured here, according to Herbert Hutchings, Sr. (Elliott)

I looked out of the living room window to where the barn had stood at the foot of a long descent down the bank and across the road. The space was open and empty. Next year, or the year after, a new house would fill the gap. Through the north window I could see the barn on my brother Howard's place, once Waitstill Dickinson's. A memory revived. "Do you remember," I asked him, "when the first barn that stood there burned down? I know the old Atkins-Hammond barn burned in 1890. My dad spoke of it once."

"I surely do. I was a shaver, four years old. Lightning struck it. My mother took me next door to where Alice lives now (at Jewett's) and we watched it from there. It was Dickinson Bros' barn. I can see it like yesterday." That was 80 years ago, or 1898.

"Lots of people told us they hated to see ours go," said Mrs. Hutchings. "Ed Markert bought it for timber; said he was going to build a covered bridge with it on one of his properties over at the old Lord Farm." She smiled, about the juxtaposition of the past and present.

"There was a lot of good wood in that barn," her husband added. "The frame was hewn from hemlock, from the woodlot below. The boards were cut from pine."

I wondered how old the barn was. "I asked Frank Pomeroy once," said Mr. Hutchings. "He said the barn was here when he came here in 1865 at age five. It was probably built around 1830. His father added the ell for the horses and tools."



This barn, in 1900, replaced the old Waitstill Dickinson barn which burned in 1898. Now owned by Allen Torrey, and formerly owned by Atkins, Berglund, Judd, and E.H. Wentworth. (Barbara Tiffany)



Barn raising, as generous men with a shared skill can do, by Amish today who came miles to help out their "unknown neighbor." They rebuilt one destroyed by June 1984 tornado in Barneveld, WI. (Elliott)

"All the old barns were pinned," he said, then explained the method of joining the beams with wood pegs. "They used an auger, then drove in the pegs. They'd hold a barn raising, and after a frame was pinned together, and everyone had had a lot to eat and drink, they'd raise it up."

"Without machinery?" I asked.

"Oh, we did a lot of things in the old days that you'd say couldn't be done without machinery. But that's the way all the old barns here were put up. Now Kentfield's — gone now — that was two barns moved together. Bill's barn, (Dana's) was built around 1890. The oldest one stood near the road; his boys helped him take it down 15 years ago. It would have been joined with wooden pegs. Not many left now . . ."

I asked him then a question I have never raised. Was it the custom in New England to have the cows on the main floor with the basement and manure pits underneath? Dad's cows (in the wood barn) were kept that way, but in Ohio the cows are on the ground floor.

"Yes, that's how barns were built here. Saved shoveling the manure through the window over a snowbank. This way, it was pushed down below and carted to the fields as soon as the fields were usable." Or maybe earlier, as another farmer once told me. "Folks weren't worried about polluting streams years ago."

We reminisced about other barns in the community, and named several including Markert's that burned by lightning. Barton's burned, Mosakewicz's burned from spontaneous combustion. Hay heated up. Pearl Thayer's, now Wentworth's property, is still standing, connected as so many New England barns were by a wood shed to the house. "It was probably built around 1830, 'pinned,' of course. Slaby's barn. That's another old timer. Belonged to a man named Robinson before even the Sandersons owned it. Now there is a market for weathered boards, for restaurants and so on. A few years ago you couldn't give the wood away!"



Amherst artist, Barbara Yauckey, makes a woodcut rendition of the handsome barn on Strong Street in 1976, owned by Chief Francis E. Hart. (Permission granted.) Compare it with the photo above taken of barn in 1984. (Elliott)





Hollyhocks frame the beautifully kept Wesley Wentworth barn (Pearl Thayer) corner of Middle Street and Bay Road showing texture of unpainted boards, and characteristics of the old glass. (Karen Waggoner, 1972)

Old barns disappear, opening the view, erasing a rural past.

For a long time, old barns hold the good smell of cows and calves, or rowen dried in the sun-filled meadows, of horses and harnesses. You step into the darkness of an empty barn and may see the sky through the spreading timbers. If you grew up on a farm, the sounds come back, the squeals of children jumping in the hay mow, the voices of men milking in the stable, the munching by the cows of grain in the mangers, even the mewing of a barn kitten. But in front of you is no wagon strewn with hay, rather a garden tractor, or a truck or apple boxes, all looking out of place beside the empty stanchions, the empty hay mows.



The present Home Cowles barn; date of building, 1871 found carved on barn bean; now sheltering a car instead of the hay wagon of former years. Homer in foreground. An earlier barn to the East was razed back in 1921 when farm was bought. (Elliott, 1974)



An abandoned hay tedder and hayrake, east of the barns of the Flavel Gaylord place in Lyman Thomson's day. The near barn in picture was an addition to an earlier larger barn in front. Shed to the left removed by present owner and restorer, Ned Markert. (Lyman Thomson, 1965)



Old Slaby (Robinson, Sanderson) barn at South East Street. Beautiful in its old age, 1860, the barn once held mows of hay and a herd of cows. (Elliott)

While a few ancient barns remain, should not one be saved in each farm community — that children may look up into the dim reaches where pigeons used to fly and wonder how men ever hewed those beams with axes, and lifted those rafters — just by themselves? To be humbled, to be proud of their forefathers?

The call is silent but final — going, going, gone!

(Below) Front view of the earlier larger barn in the picture at left showing a mural, one of many painted by Lyman Thomson on his buildings. Ned Markert, restoring the house, will save this one mural on the barn as example and for its uniqueness. (M.A. Elliott, 1984)



IS ANYONE PRESERVING OLD BARNS?

Amherst Record
October 30, 1974

To the editor:

October is the season for returning as Thomas Wolfe wrote, doubly so if one returns to Amherst. The reds of the sugar maples were beyond belief. Dr. Philip Ives said he thought the colors were the brightest in 12 seasons. Added to this enjoyment was the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the white-spired South Congregational Church.

Also on this trip, I relished the beauty of the very old houses and barns left in the area. The houses will be maintained I think, with real estate and contruction costs so high, but barns with empty hay mows and stanchions are becoming anachronistic. Is there an agency in Amherst concerned enough to preserve one or more? A retired carpenter and builder, such as Wesley Wentworth of Bay Road, might offer his judgments on barns of superior workmanship as exemplary of the building men did with axe, saw, rope, and a steel square. Barns built from trees in the area, like the one on Lyman Thomson's place, have 40-ft. beams stretching across the width. Empty, they show the fret work of the rafters, the almost Grecian feeling for balance and proportion. How can we guarantee saving a few old barns?

I am also concerned that homeowers be given encouragement to ascertain the date of construction of the century old dwellings in which they live. As in many Connecticut towns, the dates could then be placed over the main entrances.

You who live in Amherst are caught in today's rush, as I am here, but you have values that are priceless, much older than ours. I would urge individuals or agencies to preserve them!

Marjorie Elliott
Monona, Wi



Barns, sometimes "kept up" in the front, deteriorate in the back. Once a silo stood here. Once the doors hung true. A modern block type addition on the left for a large 1950 dairy is empty of cows — used only for storage. (Bill Atkins)



Two barns that look like one building in this picture at the old Dana place at 1339 South East Street now owned by David Sofield. Bill Atkins and his boys in the 1950's took down the older barn (very close to the highway) which was a peg-joined barn, circa 1800. The large sign of a red apple is nailed on the north side of the main ramp entrance to the earlier barn. Bill used this barn to store apple boxes, visible to left of double doors. Next to the orchard and at the far right of picture, are more bushel boxes. The larger dairy, hay-mow barn was converted into a hen house in the "Chicken Fever" period. Lights glowed from the windows of the barn late in the evening and early in the morning to accelerate laying. The windows cut into the smaller older barn indicate this barn probably also used in 1940's for hens. In the foreground are Bill's and his former wife Marian's daughters — Holly, nine months, and Linda, three years. (Bill Atkins)



Ready to go in the first strong blow — the old "Gray" barn, circa 1860, at 374 Middle Street. The Mannheim family live there today; past owners include Schoonmakers, and French. Barn originally one story, razed in 1970's. Featured on cover of this book. (Karen Waggoner, 1972)



In the east end of the 1890 barn (according to West Wentworth) of the Asa Dickinson farm, now the dairy barn of James Wentworth, is an old "butcher wheel," also called a "slaughter wheel," at present pushed back into the hay mow. Diameter of the wheel was about ten feet, of the shaft, one ft., and length of shaft, 12 ft. Two ropes were used, attached to the knuckles of the animals. The animals butchered were cattle, hogs, and sheep. Asa, the butcher of the area, was sometimes helped by George Dwight; the market extended to Holyoke. (Sheila Rainford, 1984)



Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Puffer, grandparents of Steven Puffer, Jr., at the West Street home in 1894. Later, owned by Thurstons, then Chas. Stiles. Both nicely kept buildings are used today by owner, Hampshire College. (S. Puffer, Jr.)



Hutchings Barn, 1860, the epitome of colonial barns — gone. (Painting by C. Schmaly, Jr.; from H. Hutchings)

Richard Babcock (TIME Aug. 5, 1985) collects barns. Some are converted into houses, some are moved. "I'm barn rich, cash poor," he says. His knowledgeable fingers read in the auger holes evidence of a hayrack — "Too low for horses — definitely for sheep."

His grandfather said colonial barns were recycled. "They were family heirlooms — you moved and pulled the pegs and took the barns with you. I've given hundreds of talks and say, 'Save the barns.' People listen, but they don't act. Barns are our strongest link with the colonial past," he says. "Preserving them, we preserve history; we preserve art." How many pegged barns are left north of Norwottuck? **M.A.E.**

SOUTH AMHERST LANDMARK REMODELED; WAS ONCE USED AS POSTOFFICE

May 10, 1956
by Maralee Davis

A little man has been caught in a spider's web for a century and a half. Though confronted by years of snow storms, he continues to stand firmly.



"Spider web fan" window over front door of old brick house, facing south on Pomeroy Lane. (Store on eastside, facing church.) (Sheila Rainford)

The little man has watched over many families in the past one hundred and fifty years. His house, a handsome white brick one, stands at the edge of historical South Amherst common; a silent reminder of the romantic past. Now the white brick home stands out with its freshness of paint — the hammer's hum barely silent a year. The interior has changed, the outside looks somewhat different, but the fan with the spider's web windows over the front door still remains after all these years, as does the little man in the spider's web.

The house was not a house, and yet it was. To be more explicit, "Mr. Gass, from out of town" first built the northeast part of the first floor for a store. Later it became the South Amherst postoffice, and Hiram Allan was the first postmaster. Hiram Allen's granddaughter, Mary Armstrong, lives in Amherst even now.

The late Charles King was the last postmaster to serve the South Amherst postoffice which once housed Waitstill Dickinson and his family. Charles Shaw and his family lived there later. Still later, James Merrick resided in the building, then Charles King, the last postmaster, and his family. The old postoffice house, purchased from Mrs. Josie Shaw by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Collins in 1947, and sold to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Ney of St. Louis is far from "old" in appearance!



Red brick store at the Green in 1925 with Mr. and Mrs. Chas. King and son, Sherwin, at entrance to store. Nuttingville folk shopped here. (W.M. Nutting)

Mr. and Mrs. Ney completely remodeled the old red brick building last year, combining the colonial features with modern equipment without forsaking the charm of the old homestead. The kitchen and dining room are one large room with brick walls exposed and handsome cabinets the only dividing line. The original colonial charm shows through each room including the charming living room which faces south.

The stairs, upon which the spider's web shadow was so often cast, have been taken down. They were replaced by stairs in the corner of the living room where the original stairs were when the house was first built.

A number of the original 12 over 12 windows, which were taken out by

owners who had abhored window washing, have been replaced with new 12 over 12s.

Sandstone steps which were a part of the old postoffice were taken down and are now used as part of the walk. And while the doorway which faced the lovely South Amherst common is no longer there, the gracious doorway with the spider's web fan window and the little man still remain.

Every house has its untold stories. No doubt the little man if he could talk, would have many tales to fascinate the generations yet to come. One interesting fact is that for a period of 21 years, the South door, over which the little man stands, was left unlocked. Many a passerby took refuge through it. Perhaps you can imagine stage coaches rolling over the old Bay Road . . . directly from Boston . . . with weary travelers who stopped at the South Amherst store. Over that same road, too, General Lafayette is said to have marched with his troops.

The South Amherst store and postoffice had 8 fireplaces and a brick wall running through the middle . . . east to west . . . attic to cellar. The original front door was directly in line with the middle door of the South Amherst Congregational Church. A watering trough stood outside, as did the town scales. The postmaster was also the sealer of weights and measures. Oxen and wagons loaded with hay were weighed there. The cement foundation is still intact.

At one time a leading citizen in South Amherst, (a Mount Holyoke graduate and the second wife of a South Amherst man), was responsible for beautifying the common. The village folk raised potatoes on the common, then sold the potatoes, spending the money to landscape it.1

The postoffice-general store contained everything — penny candy, molasses, hay, grain, flour and pickles. Mail boxes were on the left, just inside the store. The penny candy counter was on the right with the staples in back, including the old cracker barrel and plug tobacco cutter. (One poor soul was allowed only a small weekly ration of plug tobacco because his maiden sisters didn't approve.)

Other provisions were stored in the ell which the Collins family tore down. At one time a barn was connected with it. Hay was stored there, and travelers' horses were said to have been tied there on stormy nights.

The house once contained a number of Dutch ovens, and a place to smoke meats in the cellar. The large cellar was itself unusual. It had tremendous boulders in the walk, and was so deep that a large man could swing an axe in it without touching the floor joists. A trap door to the cellar lay hidden for years under a braided rug in the middle of the living room floor.

When a room was being redecorated years ago, hot spots in the old plaster reacted on the lovely shade of soft green. Red spots appeared upon the walls and eventually turned a soft shade of lavender. The walls old pine boards split with an axe — were covered with horsehair plaster. These walls held many secrets too. A child's white meal cup almost knocked a man unconscious when he was ripping out a ceiling. (In-



The old watering trough near the Green beautiful each summer filled with annual flowers by Earl Goman in the past and other market gardeners since, probably Win Shumway or Andrew Cowles. Up the hill on the left stands the Dwight sisters South Amherst home with its view of the range. (McChesney, 1972)

cidentally the second floor ceilings were 86 inches from the floor; the first floor ceilings were 94 inches high.)

An unusual brass trivet was found among other wrought iron pieces when the grounds were being leveled after the ell was torn down. An old diary stated, "the day I died," in writing of her wedding day. From between the partitions an old pair of riding boots were found . . . size 3; hidden away in the attic, next to the chimney, under loose boards was over a half bushel of patent medicine bottles. Someone evidentally had needed quite a bit of "tonic."

Two more unusual features of the old house were 10-inch stair risers and blinds which had strap hinges with iron rods to be crossed diagonally across the windows. (Mrs. King, having four children, recalls vividly the high stair lifts.)

In the '38 hurricane, a large oval wooden "bull's eye" which was between the sloping single of the roof blew down exposing the rough brick. Mr. Collins, then the owner, made a plaster cast of the center piece which he found in the rubbish under the ell.[2] The he proceeded to cast it in cement, placed it in the middle of the large oval, and eventually he filled the oval itself with cement, pailful by pailful.

South Amherst looks with pride at her old postoffice, now one of the loveliest homes in Amherst. And residents in South Amherst are



The old brick store and postoffice at the turn of this century. The word GROCERIES hangs above the store entrance where some people picked up their mail. At the far back, on the right, was a shed where farmers could buy grain from Howlett. A genuine fan window is intact except for one piece of wood. Notice the sandstone steps. (Clara Dwight)

wondering who will be the next owners of this beautiful, historical landmark where even the celebrated Lord Jeffrey Amherst may have visited.

Time will tell, and the little man in the spider's web continues to wait their arrival.

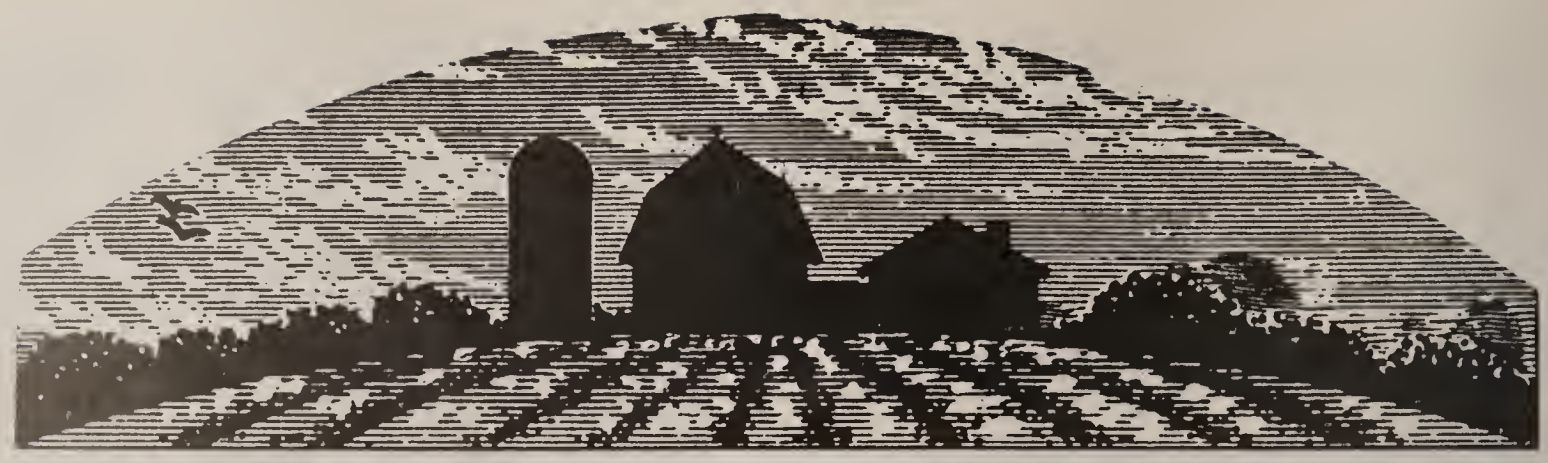
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1. Editor's note: the Village Improvement Soc. of S. Amherst was organized 4/2/1883 at the So. Cong. Church.

2. Picture from Wallace Nutting's Nuttingville book shows original "bull's eye" — 1929.



Probably the four-horse Tally-ho of Loomis Merrick (West Street) hitched up for Amherst's part in the grand parade at the Quarter Millenium at Old Hadley 1659-1909. Among those signed in from South Amherst were Win Cowles and wife, Jennie, W.H. Atkins, his sister, Mary Miller, and father, Geo. Atkins. The four day celebration booklet includes summaries of speeches by notables except an unsummarized one by a woman of the D.A.R. Clarence Hawks helped plan parade. Note the black driver, and straw hat, the customs of that day. (A booklet on the Old Hadley Quarter Millenium by Clifton Johnson 1909.)



DAIRY FARMING IN SOUTH AMHERST

By Sheila Rainford
June 1985

There have been cows and farmers in Amherst since the beginning of the town. Edwina Fish wrote in her journal in 1926:

"It must be remembered, all the inhabitants of Amherst at that time were farmers. . . .Upon the common, which was partly a swamp and partly an uneven pasture, the farmers' cows wandered at their will, and the clangor of their bells struck harshly on the ear and mingled with the creaking of the old wooden pump in front of the tavern, which furnished water for its distinguished guests. . . .Thus was the town of Amherst in the beginning with its twenty-five dwellings which made up the town."



Believed to be Mr. Goldwaithe, north of Amherst, pitching hay onto his wagon, especially for the photographer.
(Amherst Record 1972)

Each farm had an old wooden pump like the one in front of the tavern. This pump continued to be the means of drawing water for the family and their livestock until electricity and electric pumps became available in the early twentieth century. Even later, the hand operated pump remained the main source of water for livestock. It was a hard way to draw water. George Morell wrote to William Atkins on November 5, 1950:

"We pumped all water for our stock with a wooden pump at the barn well. I remember the winter my father died, 1897, that we had 35 head of stock in the barn, including three horses and four calves. It amazed me, the amount of water they could drink, and it was my job to pump it all. I was ten then and developed a powerful lot of muscle working that pump. Can recall that I pumped 100 strokes then stopped for breath. Wonder if I could do it now."

Livestock also needed hay, which was mown with a scythe. After the hay was cut, each member of the family took a pitchfork and loaded the hay onto a horse-drawn wagon. Later, they moved the hay, again by hand, from wagon to barn. Homer Cowles of South East Street told the Amherst Historical Society (in 1983) a story about pitching hay on the Atkins farm:

"They (the Atkins family) not only had the main farm on South East Street. They also owned what is still known as the Morell farm on the south side of Station Road. They cut a great deal of hay. Mr. Atkins came by one hot day in the summer, perhaps 1940. They had a man working for them, Cliff Tiffany, the herdsman who took care of the cattle. They wanted me to help pitch hay one day. Cliff was one of the few people who could load hay, loose pitched hay, on the Morell Flat and still have it on the wagon when he got back to the Atkins farm. As I pitched hay that day, I learned something. I noticed a pile of hay left behind here and there as the wagon moved along. Now, I was sure I had pitched that hay onto the wagon. What I learned was that when you pitched hay to Cliff Tiffany, you pitched it directly in front of him, no matter where he was standing in the wagon. If you didn't pitch it right in front of him — and he kept moving — if you pitched it behind him, he gave it a shove and it went back on the ground. At some point, somebody told me, 'Smarten up, kid, and put it



E.H. Wentworth, standing beside the milk delivery wagon he used on his milk route 1905 to 1908. Grandson James Wentworth operates a dairy at the same "Fair Acres" farm in 1985.
(Mrs. Alice W. Owen)

Nicholas Rak's salt-box home and barn (earlier J. Smith, Chapman) at 650 South East Street. Mother in foreground had washed and scalded milk cans at right. Home and barn burned in mid-1920's. Passerby rescued a baby boy in crib, but did not see its twin in the smoke. (Bertha Rak Parsons)

in front of him, and you won't have to walk a hundred feet back and pick it up!'."

Tractors, mowers, balers, loaders, manure spreaders, conveyor belts, and other mechanical equipment made greater production possible but demanded a high level of education and practical mechanical skill. The farmer had to understand not just the land and livestock but also internal combustion engines, electric motors, and hydraulics. Local farmers welcomed the development of the land grant college they affectionately called "Mass Aggie." Not all farmers agreed, however, that "scientific farming" as stressed by the land



The Herman Markert home on West Street in the deep snow of winter. Six boys and a girl helped their folks with a successful dairy, fruit and poultry business of the farm. The farm today is Orchard Valley Development. (Carl Markert)



Empty 10 gal. (40 quart) milk cans waiting on a cart at a R.R. station, to be picked up by the dairyman, circa 1930. (F.I. Elliott)

grant colleges was important. One unidentified farmer wrote to Hoard's Dairyman in July 1910:

"There is not one particle of science about farming. It is simply a business. And this teaching of all these fool fads about scientific agriculture has been a terrible curse to the American farmer."



The Slaby (Robinson, Sanderson) barn of the 1830's on South East Street. At right, the milk house, required by law in the 1930's. Beautiful in its old age, the barn once held mows of hay and a herd of cows. *(M.A. Elliott)*

Farming is a business, a difficult business that has been made more difficult by fads, health regulations, idosyncrasis of the weather, government regulations, and economic factors. South Amherst dairy farmers have not been exempt from these stresses.

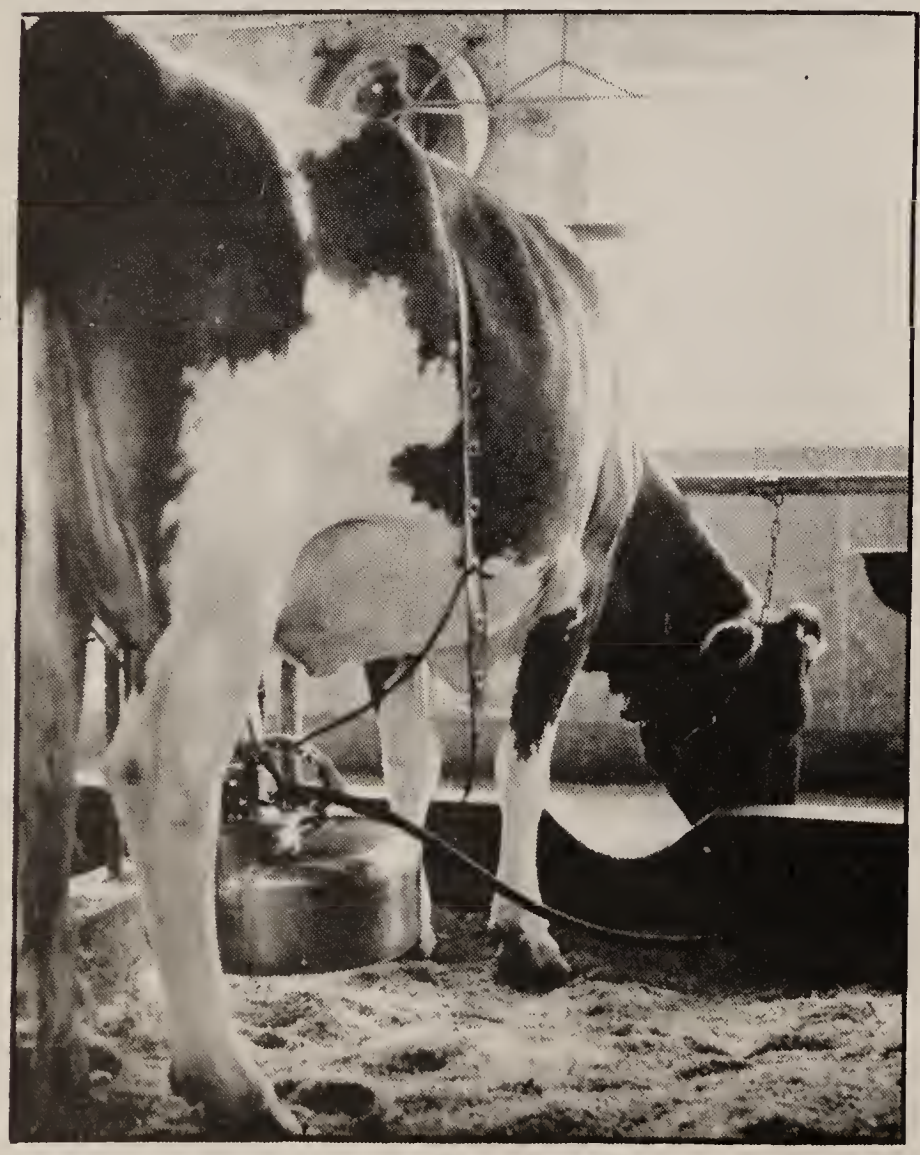
Between 1910 and 1935 "dairy fever" peaked both in South Amherst and across the nation. Milk emerged as a staple American beverage. When not handled properly, however, milk also became a major health hazard. Many public outbreaks of diseases such as tuberculosis and brucellosis could be traced to diseased cows or contaminated milk. In 1908, Chicago became the first city in the U.S. to order that all milk sold in the city be pasteurized. Massachusetts passed such a law soon afterwards. Massachusetts now requires that cows be inspected and tested regularly for tuberculosis and also that they be inoculated against brucellosis, a disease that causes abortions in cattle and undulant fever in people. Any diseased animal is immediately destroyed. Farmers in Amherst also take advantage of a voluntary program for mastitis testing available at the Paige Lab of the University of Massachusetts.

Other events, still important to local dairy farms, that took place in this active period between 1910 and 1935 are as follows: 1) The Smith Lever Act of 1914 established the Extension Service, encouraging dairy research at universities such as the Massachusetts Agricultural College and a sharing of results of research directly with farmers. 2) The National Dairy Council was created in 1915 and helped to promote the nutritional value of milk and dairy products. 3) The National Milk Producers Federation was formed in 1916, primarily to lobby in Washington, D.C. 4) From 1910 to 1935 electricity, the modern day miracle, came to the farm. It lighted the barns, heated the water, controlled refrigeration, ran the cream separator and the modern milking machine(1). 5) In 1924, insulated tank cars appeared making it possible to ship milk longer distances than by truck; tank trucks came to the farm in the 1950's(2). 6) In 1932, the U.S. was introduced to homogenized milk. 7) The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, passed partly in response to the milk strikes of the ten year period following the sharp recession of 1920-21, gave the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to develop marketing agreements. The idea of protection for dairymen was made law in the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937. Hoard's Dairyman emphasizes the importance of these acts:

"The regulatory system that developed from this is the Federal Market Order System which regulates dealers and sets the price of milk at the producer level by defining geographic marketing regions, 'pooling' all of the milk entering the region . . . and calculating a blend price that will be paid to all milk producers." 8) After 1938, as artifical insemination of dairy cows gradually became widespread, dairymen bred their cows to superior bulls thus increasing milk production and eliminating the hazard of keeping a fractious bull around the farm. 9) Milk production per cow doubled and the dairy cow population was halved between 1930 and 1970.



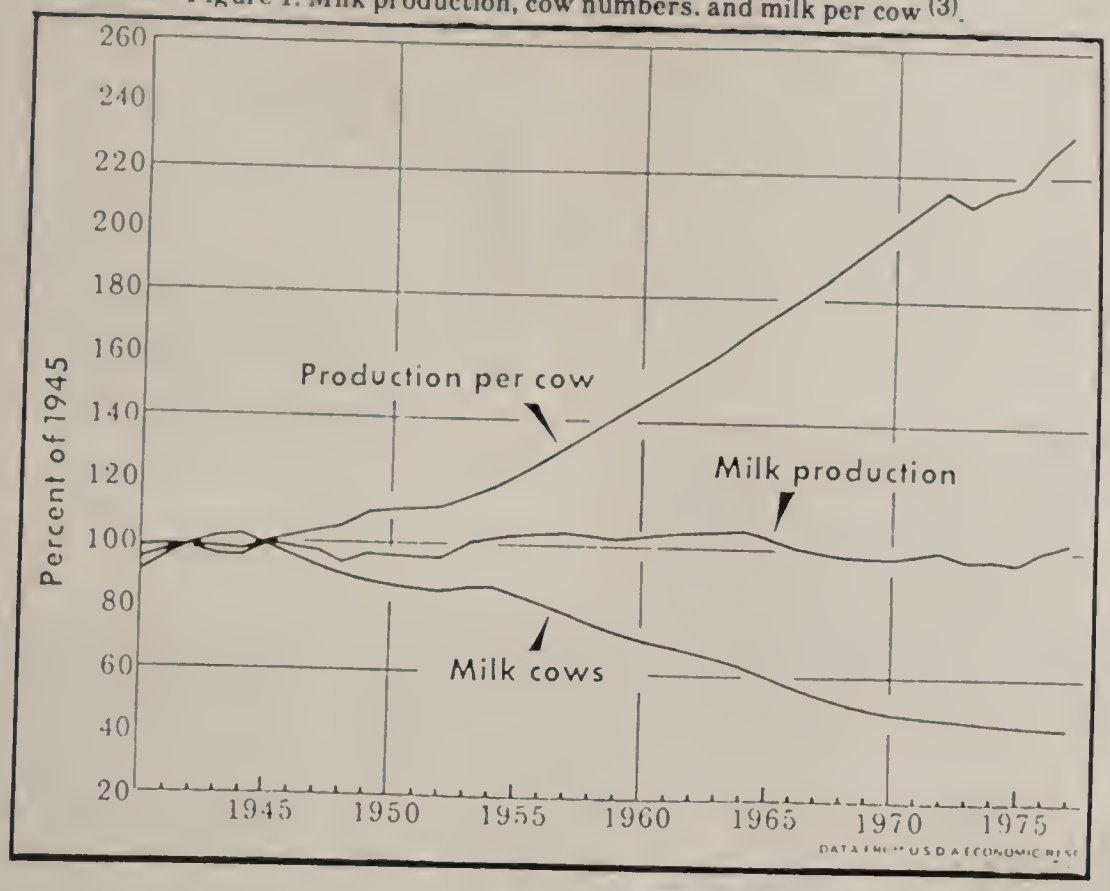
A small herd of Jerseys, a prominent breed in South Amherst during the heyday of dairying there. (Ulysses Groth, West Pomeroy Lane had a prize Jersey bull named Valiant.)
(Hoard's Dairyman)



Spotted Jersey cow being milked by a large machine, before the days of pipeline milking. Note roomier "comfort" stall, water cup, and less confining chain tie.
(Hoard's Dairyman Photo)

CHART OF MILK PRODUCTION,
COW NUMBERS, AND MILK PER COW.

Figure 1. Milk production, cow numbers, and milk per cow (3).



The Great Depression of the thirties didn't affect Amherst farmers as much as farmers elsewhere. Those in the Great Plains growing one crop, however, were often wiped out, some by the Dust Bowl. There was a general feeling here that you could "get by" as long as you had a few animals, a large garden, and were willing to help each other. You bought from a neighbor's child selling asparagus door to door. You made clothes from printed grain bags. Bartering was a popular practice — a man would give his neighbor a haircut in exchange for transportation, a music lesson for milk, but houses were left unpainted, roofs unrepaired and the housewife rotated the linoleum a quarter turn. Occasionally, a member of the family got a part-time service job at one of the colleges which brought in some cash. Women had few outside opportunities. (High school teachers in 1939 with a master's degree began at $1,100 a year; a woman teacher that married lost her position.) The South Amherst Canning Lab hired up to 11 local women but no women were hired as apple pickers. The steady income provided by the two colleges was a help toward keeping the town on solid economic footing.

Some farmers had to declare bankruptcy. Homer Cowles reports that his dad was called to the bank about payments. He told them he had no cash assets. They would have to take his farm. Because Amherst was a small town and men's reputations were well known, the bank did not foreclose his farm. Today, his son and grandson continue to operate the farm and successfully.

The 1940's were a relatively stable time for local farmers. After World War II, however, the town began to change radically as the population increased, in large part as a result of the growth of the University of Massachusetts. Veterans returned to the University under generous grants from their country. This influx created pressures for housing, for more schools for the little children and it increased the need for and cost of all town services(4). The building boom caused land prices to rise and taxes escalated. Homer Cowles explained one aspect of the situation to the Amherst Historical Society in 1983:



Linwood Buczala, co-worker with his dad, seen at milking time behind one of their Holstein cows, at Bay Road.
(Sheila Rainford)

"We have a very strong Conservation Commission in town, but it creates hardships on the people who own land that the town does not own. The Commission pays $480 to $500 per acre for wetlands. In the 1940's, I paid $5 per acre for that kind of land. They have, in effect, placed a value of $500 an acre on that land and driven up the value of the rest."

Equally hard on the farmer who continues to operate is the boom in housing which also pushes land prices and taxes upwards.

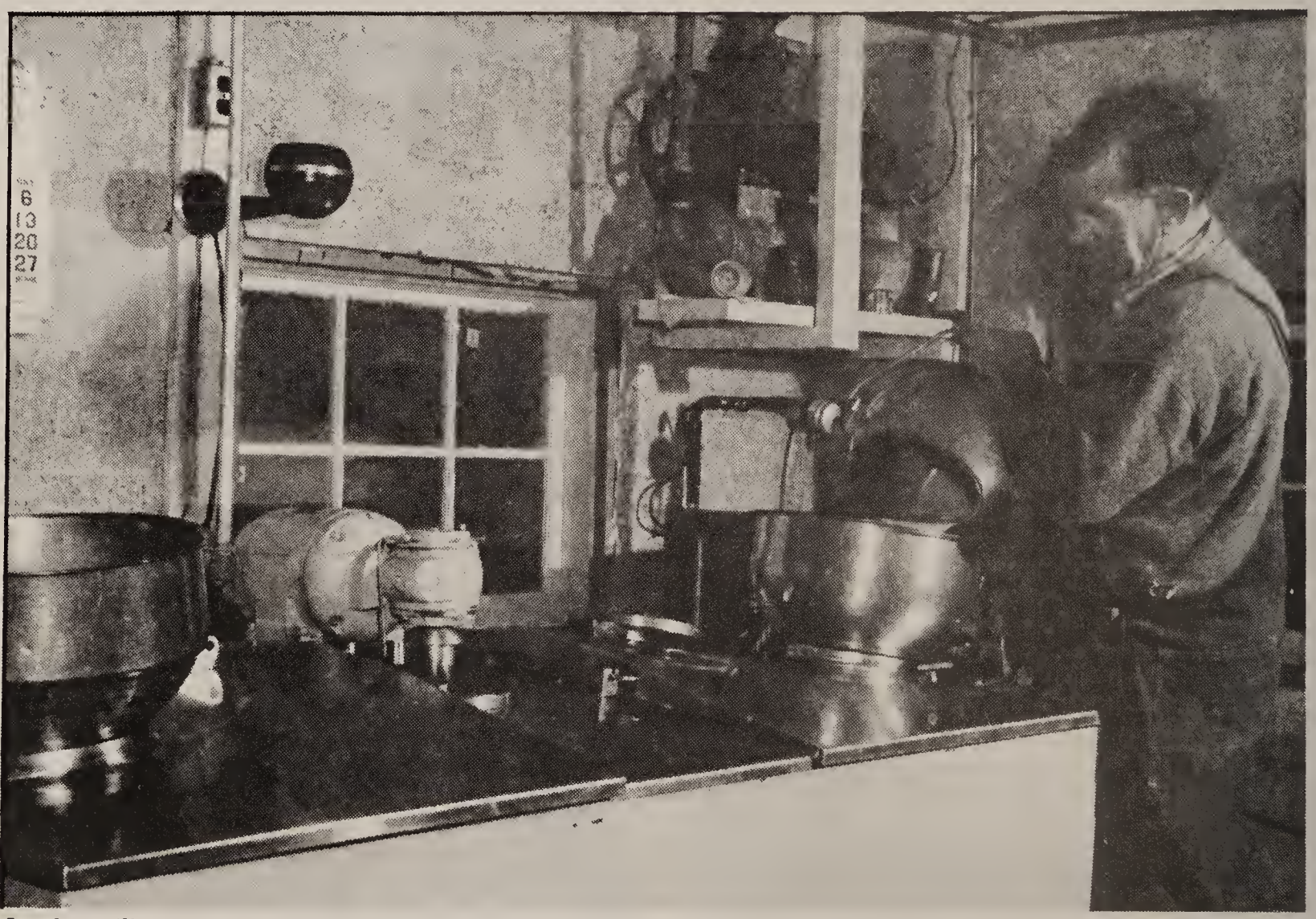
The greatest help and hope for farmers has been the passage of a tax abatement law known as Chapter 61 A and

the state's Agricultural Restriction Program. Under these laws, the state and town purchase development rights of agricultural land and assign tax values to land based on its usage, thus addressing the economic problem of the value of developed land versus the value of farm land. Amherst is in the forefront of the 351 towns in the Commonwealth in terms of acknowledging the benefits of these statutes. The Buczala family, for example has placed 183 acres of farmland under preservation restrictions, and was one of the first farms in the state to do so. Homer Cowles says, "Were it not for 61 A, we'd be in serious trouble." As of this writing, 140 people in Amherst have either sold development rights or are in some way receiving tax benefits from having land classified as forest or agricultural.

South Amherst is very different from its earliest days as described by Edwina Fish. The first families here were all farmers. In fact, until the rapid increase in urbanization began after World War II, most South Amherst people lived on a farm even if they did other work.



A glass block window on the modern H.W. Atkins cement block dairy barn, built in 1951; used for storage since sale of herd in 1964.
(Everet Dimock, 1985)



In the milk room of the H.W. Atkins' 1951 dairy barn, Cliff Tiffany pours milk into the electrically cooled milk tank. An electric agitator operated in the tank. Milk was pumped into a modern milk tank truck daily. *(Barbara Tiffany, 1950's)*

In 1955, the heyday of the dairy industry, the list of South Amherst dairymen (including dairywoman Charlotte March) is impressive: Dana Rosebrook, Charles Stiles[5], Hubert Barton, James Tufts, George Dana, Irving Hendricks, James Fitts, Philipowitz, George Kendrick, Rodney Gray, Jacob Mosakewicz, W.H. and Howard Atkins, Charlotte March, Ulysses Groff, Ralph Hayward, W.H. Smith, Edward Slaby, Pearl Thayer, Ted Critchett, Teofil Mienka, William Chaffee, Bill Kershlis, Nicholas Rock, W.A. Sauer, Harold Wentworth, Charles Thompson, Herman Markert and sons, and Ralph Crocker. There may have been others[6].

But by 1965 Atkins had auctioned his dairy herd. The War called Carl Markert to service so his dad sold the dairy — kept Carl's poultry[7]. Charles Stiles had no sons wanting to farm. He managed through the War (Stuart in service) but in 1965 his 30 cows were sold, and the land became part of Hampshire College. So, in 1985 there were only two operating dairy farms left in South Amherst, the George Buczala family farm at 200 Bay Road and the James Wentworth family farm at 756 South East Street.

The Wentworths already had the family farm and dairy, once W.A. Sauer's and then his son-in-law's, Harold Wentworth. They now have seventy milkers and sixty heifers. Most of these are Ayrshires, but there are a few Holsteins. Dairying is a difficult business. The Federal Market Order



Frances Wentworth (center), dairywoman and part-time worker in 1984 at the Fruit Bowl, with Earle Rhodes and Irene Luechesi, also employees. (Atkins Fruit Bowl)

System keeps the price paid to milk producers very low, while the cost of doing business continues to rise. All of the stresses mentioned earlier in this article beleaguer local farmers.

What is the future of dairying? As George Buczala says, "That's a damn good question right now!" But he proudly recalls that when he and his wife decided to take the challenge and buy the farm from Ted Critchett, a handshake on a Saturday sealed the bargain. "He called me up on Monday and asked if I still meant it, and I said I did." There's a kind of winning spirit in a man whose handshake replaces a contract. And let him tell you how he, Helen, and their son, Linwood, have tested the soil and rebuilt it so that more hay grows than they need even for their 40 cows and 28 heifers. Of these 14 are Jerseys who give the creamier content, and the rest are Holsteins, for quantity. You leave his farm and you feel "There's a set-up willing to work and make it work."

Why continue to farm? Frances Wentworth's father and husband were both dairymen. She says, "That's what I was born to. I like it." George Buczala, whose wife, Helen Mosakewicz, was a dairyman's daughter, replies, "Farming is a part of my life. It's a great challenge. It offers an opportunity to 'reach out' for something others don't have and to be closer to Mother Nature and God Almighty."

To know these wonderful people is to hope they maintain their two farms, a vestige of what was once a rural community.



Helen and George Buczala pictured in their work clothes in front of their dairy barn on Bay Road, Helen carrying a two quart can to obtain milk for the house. (In 1890's this was the Moriarty farm.) (Picture from church files)



James Wentworth, son of Frances and Harold Wentworth, the operator of the Wentworth farm, 60 milkers, at South East Street. (Barn has "slaughter wheel" of Asa Dickinson on first floor). (Sheila Rainford)

Footnotes, (by M. Elliott):

1. "We started using milking machines, an Empire, in the early 1920's," Stuart Stiles.

2. Milk cans holding forty quarts each were transported from farms by milk trucks. The milk was cooled at the farm in "ice water holding tanks." They were hefted up into the truck by the driver, the heavy doors clanged shut, at each dairyman's unless he lived on West Street and used the trolley (until 1932) for transporation of milk to Holyoke. At Stiles' "the trolley picked up the milk each day at noon from a platform in front of the house. The Holyoke Producers Dairy was formed in 1921 by H.P.D. (or Harold P. Darling), brother-in-law of Dana Rosebrook who lived in the town farm sold by the town in 1914." Stuart Stiles.

3. J.R. Lodge, Editor, A Symposium on Animal Agriculture, special publication 57, University of Illinois, 1979. Chart by F.I. Elliott in "Random Observations from the Practical Side," p. 23.

4. The attendance in the lower grades went on split shifts.

5. "Incidentally, at one time some fire fighting equipment was kept at Charles Stiles' horse barn. I remember they had four horses and a reel of hose and perhaps other items. Don't recall when." From Paul Thorpe.

6. "Cows in Amherst in 1955 numbered no less than 3,091, the largest number per square mile of any town in the state, and second largest total," from Frank Rand, Amherst, a Landmark of Light, p. 112.

7. Carl Markert returned home in 1946 after four years in service and with his brother, Herman, and dad, attempted to rebuild the herd. The father retired in 1948. Herman gave up farming in 1950. Carl took over the farm. Unable to buy out the family farm, Carl decided to give up farming and sold the second herd, and equipment, at an auction in 1964. The family then sold the land for development into Orchard Valley, January 1964. From Carl Markert.

"TOBACCO FEVER" IN SOUTH AMHERST
1900 - 1930's
By M. A. Elliott

Since the mid-19th century, tobacco has been grown in the Connecticut River Valley, especially in the bottom land of Sunderland and Hadley. Tobacco was raised in South Amherst, too, but farmers started up later, 1900 to the 1930's. Several factors ended the "tobacco fever here.[1]

The hurricane of '38 probably discouraged some tobacco growers from continuing. Baxter Eastman in the **Amherst Record**, 3/8/78, reported on the damage done by that severe hurricane to tobacco sheds. He says, "Winds reached nearly 200 miles an hour . . . In Hatfield alone 89 tobacco sheds (value, $143,000) were blown down. Crops in the sheds were scattered at a loss of $94,000. . . . In Sunderland 136 tobacco sheds were smashed. All through Massachusetts, 482 sheds were destroyed, and many barns that stood through the winds were burned, catching on fire from charcoal burners within the barns used to dry tobacco." (Burners were not used in South Amherst.)

"South Amherst sheds would be included in the total figure of 482 destroyed. By 1940 tobacco was no longer a favored crop. It is still a good cash crop, two tons per acre, but the labor is tedious, hard and repetitious. It seems that sons finding supplementary jobs in their late youth chose not to earn their livelihood in the manner of their fathers or grandfathers, newcomers to America. Their own families would have fewer children; hence, less "free" family labor for the field. In addition, raising tobacco requires surveillance throughout the whole growing season, more than the youth of the 1920's might want to give as adults. Whatever the factors, the number of acres devoted to tobacco decreased after the 1920's.

South Amherst tobacco growers raised Havana Seed Type 52 tobacco (cigar leaf) as late as 1960 but the amount shrank from 260 acres in 1950 to 243 in 1955 and to 33 in 1960. No one grows tobacco in South Amherst in 1985. One tobacco shed is still standing, owned by Stan Mosakewicz on South East Street. His folks, as well as Marcos' next door, had both grown the cigar leaf tobacco[2].



The last standing tobacco barn left in South Amherst owned by Stan Mosakewicz, South East Street. Vista toward Lawrence Swamp beyond. (Sheila Rainford)

Tobacco varieties for different uses are chosen according to soil, climate, and other factors. North Carolina grows the most. Southwest of Amherst, the airborn passenger from the Hartford-Springfield airport can see tobacco fields covered with white fabric, a protection against hail and an effective builder of heat. This is a method used for growing "shade tobacco," the kind that wraps the inner leaves of cigars.



An aerial view from plane leaving Hartford-Springfield Airport of "shade tobacco" grown under cover. (M.A. Elliott)

On farmlands, outside of Madison, Wis., the variety grown is "chewing tobacco." We visited a family harvesting tobacco on Labor Day 1985. The procedure follows: The Johnson family had already cut a third of the tobacco which lay on the ground in piles, thick-stalked and large-leafed where it had been permitted to wilt for several hours[1]. A young man Lee Bulman (who once played football in school) showed us a removable steel spear on the narrow wooden lath onto which he literally "speared" the center of the stalk, pushed it back on the lath and speared five more. He then laid it on top of a pile of four or five loaded laths. Another man lifted it up to a man on a wagon pulled by a tractor.



Lee Bulman, 24, of Wisconsin, works on Labor Day for Johnson, spearing wilted tobacco with a six inch metal spear thru the core of each plant cut by axe the day before. (F.I. Elliott)

We were told individual plants were fed into the planter machine in early June. Frequent hoeing followed but a herbicide now does away with that job. Thereafter the grower watches for pests, like aphids, which may suddenly appear sucking the juice of the leaves. Immediate eradication is needed by spraying.

Once the bud appears on the center stalk, it must be cut off. The 81 year old grandmother, Mrs. Charlotte Good, who walked out to the field with me, told me she had spent much of her girlhood in the tobacco fields and pointed out where the center blossom would open and where each had already been cut off. Suckers start up at that stage and must be removed down through the foliage to the ground without damaging surrounding leaves. "You had to cut off each sucker," she said. "There would be half a dozen sprouts up and down the sides of the center stalk, making the worker bend lower and lower, feeling for the next sucker. Oh, how I hated the smell of those plants with my face buried in them all day!"

Since then a spray called "sucker-stuff" has been developed which prevents sucker growth, eliminating that toil. "It used to make my back ache," she said, remembering. (I thought, well she personally broke away from tobacco growing. She got a higher education and was our youngest child's first grade teacher! She drove with a friend, leaving at 4 a.m. for Whitewater, to summer school.) But today her daughter is married to a man who still prefers to rent additional land for the growing of tobacco as a side line, a skill he learned from his father. So she still hears tobacco talk but no longer works in the field. Living with her daughter and son-in-law she prepares meals while they continue to work on the tobacco.



Johnny Johnson with tobacco axe, used by his father-in-law before him. (F.I. Elliott)

A crop of tobacco requires exact timing, and careful watching of the weather. At 17 to 20 days after the sucker stage, a right-angled "tobacco axe" is used to cut down the plants when three feet or so in height. The axe held in the picture was well-worn along the handle. It had belonged to Mrs. Good's husband, used by him all his lifetime.

We followed the load of speared tobacco on laths lying flat, headed for the tobacco shed. (This is contrary to the way cigar leaf tobacco was transported in the Connecticut Valley where it hung vertically in the truck — see picture.) The tobacco barn was built like sheds in South Amherst with shutters, or "vents," as they say here, constructed from top to bottom, manually operated.



A 1930 picture of a load of "cigar leaf" tobacco pulled by horse and wagon to a tobacco shed in Hadley. The cigar leaf tobacco is in a hanging position rather than lying flat as for "chewing tobacco." (Steven Puffer)



Scott Johnson drives a tractor hauling the wilted tobacco speared onto laths to the tobacco barn. Chewing tobacco leaves can lie flat, saving space. (F.I. Elliott)



At the tobacco barn, Duane Chase, 15, takes the 25 lb. sticks of tobacco from Dan Braatz. (F. I. Elliott)

Unloading requires four men: the first, Dan Braatz, 18, handed the lath weighing 25 lbs. down to a 15 year old boy, Duane Chase, on the ground who carried it just inside to Scott Johnson who lifted it up toward his dad straddling two of the crossbars above him. His father, a muscular man, reached down for the loaded lath and hung it on two of the poles that crossed the barn at about a ten to twelve foot height. The tobacco would dry in the shed until a cool fog around November or early December, and then the stripping of the leaves would begin.



Scott Johnson carries the tobacco sticks to his dad, who, straddling the four foot distance between the beams, hangs the speared tobacco across poles overhead. (F.I. Elliott)

Street: "We raised tobacco from the early thirties to the late fifties. On our street everybody raised it." Jack Schoonmaker: "South Amherst had a number of hard working farmers mostly of Polish descent. They grew tobacco primarily for cigar leaves." Rodney Gray: "I raised tobacco for ten years in the 1940's; owned the first tobacco barn in South Amherst, built by 'old Bill Smith,' who owned it until I bought it. I quit raising tobacco because of the high cost of labor, government quotas, low prices and the 'awful amount of fertilizer' needed for each acre(2)"



Chauncey Simmons' place on Middle Street, So. Amherst when he raised a lot of tobacco. (McChesney, 1972)



Johnny Johnson placing a "stick" of tobacco as he has all his life. (F.I. Elliott)

"Chewing tobacco" is sold 50 lbs. to a bale. Any rusted or "burned" tobacco makes it nearly worthless — except as used for nicotine in some sprays. "I pulled out these bales from last year's crop," he told us. "If the bale examined is faulty your whole 'lot number' is graded by that one bale. I've never submitted a poor bale," he said proudly. This was the procedure observed for growing Wisconsin "chewing tobacco" today(1).

A list of quotes from one-time tobacco growers includes Brainard Lyman, in 1976, "There was quite a lot of tobacco raised here: Mosakewicz, Marco, Gray, Kershlis, Slaby, Chauncey Simmons' place on Middle Street were all tobacco." . . . "The big corporations came in, the syndicates; they squeezed the little fella out." Charles Mitchell of North East

It is obvious how much individual labor goes into growing tobacco even today and there are other "easier" ways to earn a living. The growing of tobacco has decreased; that is evident. The lessening popularity of cigars has to be a factor — health discounts the pleasure of smoking. Also, each year for the last 20 years, land has escalated in value. Land with a view is $35,000 to $50,000 for a superior site. Many farmers in late years sell out and retire handsomely, some to Florida. South Amherst is losing its larger sized rural occupations, but also its countryside views, it could become an area of roof tops if steps are not taken to preserve or regain the vistas that made South Amherst so desirable a place in which to live.

Footnotes:

1. Joe Kershlis, born in 1889 in Lithuania came to the United States in 1895, to South Amherst in early 1900's, running a dairy farm and raising tobacco on Middle Street and Potwine Lane. His son, John, said he believed his father was the first farmer to grow tobacco in South Amherst area. (Joe retired in 1958; wintered in Florida and died in 1979.) A brother, William, lives on a lovely site facing the Green on South East Street. (Obituary)

2. From Sheila Rainford's research.

3. Helen Mosakewicz Buczala, who helped her family on South East Street raise cigar leaf tobacco did not notice any difference between their harvest of older days and the description of chewing tobacco harvest methods in Wisconsin.



Beautiful restoration indoors and out of the old Ziba Bolter house, built between 1790 and 1820 at 1611 South East Street, by Robert Sweeney shown here with daughter, Laura. The property has recently been sold by Prof. Sweeney, 1985. (Picture from Robert Sweeney)



Five tobacco barns on left two-thirds of picture in front of Mt. Warner in North Hadley, Mass. A once neglected orchard is now bearing (on slope of Mt. Warner) after a pruning. In distance the Seven Sisters of Mt. Holyoke Range. (Karen Waggoner, Amherst Record)



Another barn in the Connecticut Valley, apparently with a dad's tobacco hung above, leaving room for storing the son's new motor boat — a compromise until the young man takes over and no tobacco is grown on the farm at all. (Amherst Record)

FATHER BOUGHT A FARM IN PELHAM

Amherst Record
Aug. 9, 1959
Submitted by Alfred S. Romer

Lyman Sibley Rowland, who later graduated from Amherst College and became a minister, lived in Pelham as a youth a century and a quarter ago.(1) He didn't like it much, as can be seen below. He wrote an autobiography, from which I can quote, thanks to a descendant, Mrs. Robert Fischer.

His father had been a tenant farmer in Oxford, Grafton, and Dudley, MA. But now, to quote:

"Father had 'land hunger' and 'had it bad.' He got restless, wanted a place of his own, and finally he pulled up stakes and moved again! He had saved a little money and now he bought a farm in Pelham, Hampshire Co. There were 60 acres of poor land, a good wood lot, a barn, an old cow barn and a house. He had farmed for other people all his life, now he would have one of his own. It was nothing to him that he was already 50 years old, in a thriving village where four children could live at home and earn good wages, where the younger ones could go to school. There were now seven children and in Dudley there would be a place for them all as they came along; but no -he must buy a farm!

"The change was made in July 1841. I was 10 years old, and I had planted a garden myself which was doing well -but I turned it over to the man in the other part of the house. A man came down from Ware and moved the household goods and brought a two-seated wagon for mother and the little ones. We left one afternoon, rode through Southbridge and Sturbridge and spent the night in West Brookfield. The next day we passed through Ware, got along to Enfield for lunch and reached the new home in Pelham, in the afternoon of July eighth and unpacked enough to get a supper and beds for the tired family. It seemed a long journey to me though the distance was about 40 miles. The chestnut trees were in bloom. Perhaps I had seen them before, but I saw them with new eyes then and never since have I seen the chestnut trees lightening the hillsides with their flowers without thinking of that midsummer journey.

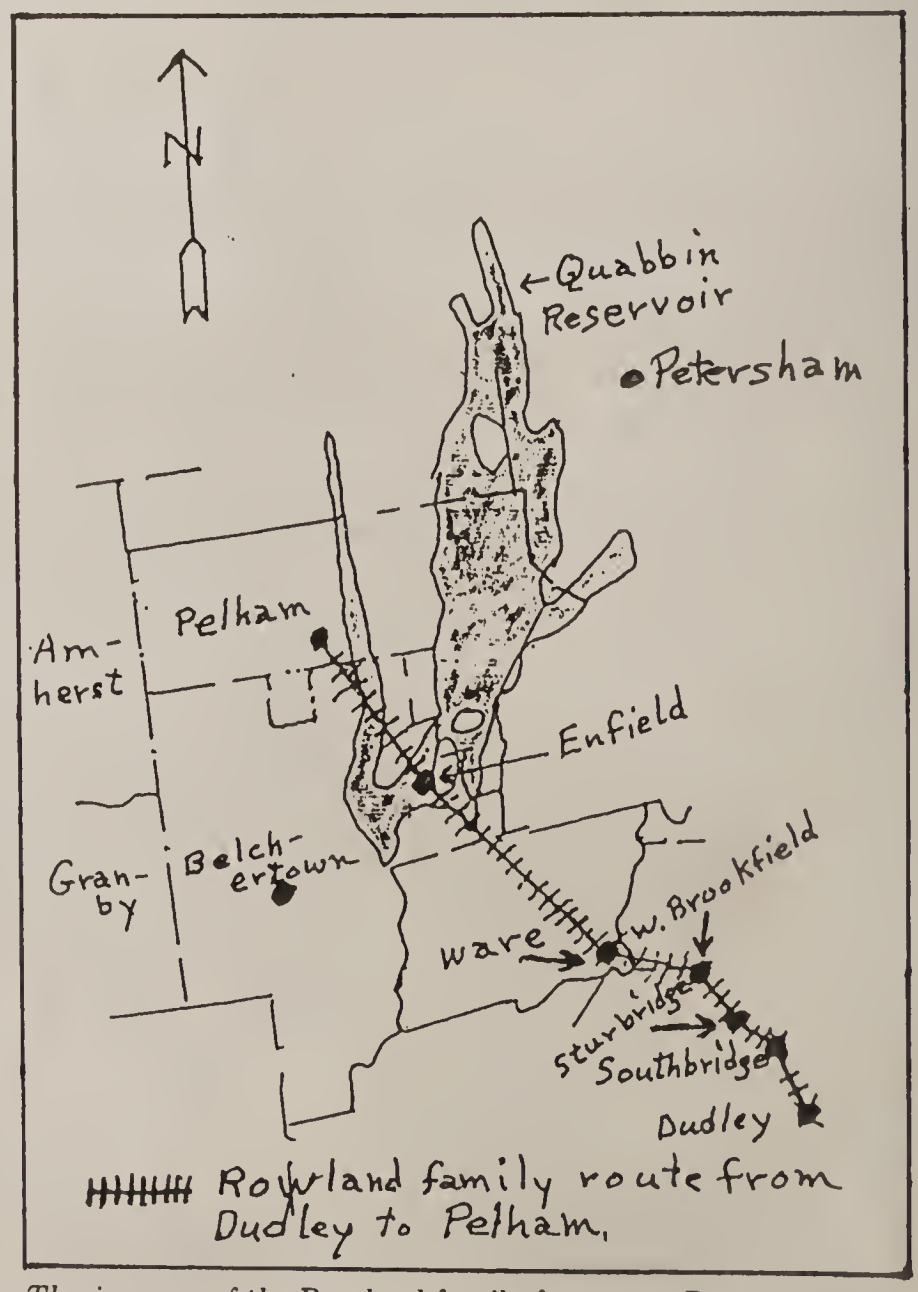
"It was too late in the season to raise anything, but there was hay to cut and endless repairs and improvements awaiting the new owner, and father went to work very enthusiastically. The sense of proprietorship was an inspiration to him,



Pelham Town Hall Complex, a Massachusetts Historic Landmark. (Pelham Historical Society stationery)

and I, a boy of 10, of course enjoyed the change and entered zealously into my part of the work. I think I can say truthfully that I earned my full living after I was 10 years old. I went to district school only two short terms of eight weeks each after that time, and I was at work all the time either out of doors or in, not occasionally but constantly. Indeed there was nothing to do but work. Circumstances afforded hardly any opportunity for youthful enjoyments. My only diversion was a book when I could get one, which was not often.

"It was a hard struggle to make a living off this farm, nor was it ever really done without substantial help from the children who were obliged to go away for work, since there was nothing here for them to do. Yet poor as it was, it made a home and gathering place for the family for 14 or 15 years, and it is the only place of all my various sojournings to which the sense of HOME attaches . . .



The journey of the Rowland family from near Dudley, MA, to Pelham in July 1841 is marked on the map. This also shows Quabbin Reservoir, finished in 1922 (water for Boston), which flooded the villages of Enfield, Dana, Greenwich and Prescott. (Map adapted by F.I. Elliott for this article)



". . .The farm was . . . in the south part of the town between roads leading from Pelham Centre to Belchertown and that from Pelham Centre to Enfield. It was two and a half miles from the Centre and five from Enfield, a rough, stony farm with a wide prospect. Wachuset Mountain stood directly east 40 or 50 miles away, and Mount Monadnock, northeast perhaps as far. We could look over Prescott and Petersham, and they said we could see 12 steeples, but I never did. The prospect was the best and principal product of the farm, which lay 40 or 50 rods off the road down a lane, and there were perhaps seven families within a half mile, one Mr. Daniel Dodge was quite near . . .

"Sometimes we had prayer-meetings around at the houses and brought in boards to help out the chairs. Sometimes there were baptisms at the Packardville church and they dammed up a brook to make a pond deep enough for an immersion. Sometimes there were parties with rough kissing games and a dance in the kitchen, the cook-stove taken down for the occasion. I occasionally went to one, but I couldn't dance and I didn't enjoy them. There were no sports except ball on Fast-Days (a sermon or service then was unheard of), and hunting on old election day (the last Wednesday in May), when we killed all the birds we could.(2)

"The house that we had come to had been built some years before by Phineas Davidson, and it was neither new nor in good repair. There were two rooms on the lower floor with an open shed or 'back-way' partitioned off at one end. The room on the north was ceiled or boarded at the sides and overhead. This was the 'best room.' Of course there was a bed in it and at first it was heated by a fireplace for which we had some brass andirons, and later by a stove. This was for 'company,' for the children who came home for visits, for the teacher who 'boarded round,' and for me years afterward when I came home from college. In the later years we had a rag-carpet on the floor and here Lucy was married.

"On the left, or south was the living room with mother's bed in it. A dresser was built across one corner, and the fireplace had an iron frame and shelf, the only fine thing in the room. In the later years there was a stove too, and in very cold weather both stove and fireplace were kept going! This room was boarded at the sides, but not ceiled. The beams were exposed; poles went across and hanging shelves.

"Upstairs was one large room running the whole length. At the south end the corn was stored in the winter, but there was no 'drapery' nor even a bedquilt separating the granary from the bedroom because we needed the light from the window. In this south part we had two beds for the girls, and the north side of the chimney was my room or 'the boy's room.'

"The whole attic was so low that only the middle was available and the chimney was so large that it made all the partition that was needed! There was no ceiling or boarding and, of course, no plaster and I have often told my children how I could look out of the cracks and see the stars and how many a time I have waked up to find little drifts of snow on my bedquilt. In the course of time, father shingled the roof and then it was tight and we had no more snow inside, but as father used to say, 'We lived here seven years before we had a roof over our heads.'

"After a while Harriet fixed up the 'boy's room,' made a stand out of a barrel, carried up a chair, and then 'the boy' had a fine room where he could study his lessons and be by himself! But I used to take the cat to bed to keep my back warm. The cat like it and would come up and purr to get into bed with me!

"South of the barn and in the lane was a never-failing spring and the cows had to come up from the pastures for their water, but it was very convenient in winter. Near the porch door was a well and father paved the ground between so that we could get our water dry-shod. The first year we had no stock but a horse and cow, but we sometimes had two or three cows, a yoke of steers, or oxen. By and by father sold off a lot of walnut wood for timber and bought a buggy, and the buggy and the firewood together occuppied the old cow-barn.

"Soon after we settled down in Pelham we all learned how to braid palm leaf hats. It was an industry carried on in all the towns around by



almost every household, and an industry that was a great boon to the people on these little farms as it was work that required no capital and no tools, could be taken up for a few minutes and dropped at any time - was clean, pleasant, promoted sociability, for you could take a hat and run over to a neighbor's and braid - old and young could work and talk, and money could be earned at it when nothing else could be done.

"The palm-leaf cut in strips and ready for use, was sometimes carried around by peddlers who took the finished hats on the next trip, but more often the material was given out at the stores. We usually got ours at 'Hills' in Amherst and carried our hats back there, receiving our groceries in return. I learned to braid and became quite expert at it, as I could pull my braid up firm and tight. First we braided a 'button' an inch or more square and secured it with a fragment of the palm leaf. The we added them continually and braided the top of the crown, - stopped adding them to make the sides of the crown, and then suddenly put in a lot more to braid the brim. There were three sizes of hat (at least), and many grades of fineness, and some varieties too, made by using some colored strands. There were very nice ones with doubled brims.

"People got very expert and could braid in the dark. Some would occasionally give a whole day to it and finish six - though they could hardly have been of large size or fine grade. But sandwiched in with other work, utilizing the stormy days and the long evenings, boys and girls, young and old, picking up a hat to braid at odd minutes, in all these ways a good many hats would go from every home to the store, and many a household paid all its store bills in this way. Harriet thinks that we usually bought our palm-leaves outright and then received more for our hats; - that the prices averaged ten cents a hat, with the nice fine ones bringing twenty-five cents. But I remember getting some straw from Chauncey Wheeler (not paying for it), and later I carried back one hundred hats, tied up in a sheet and slung over while I trudged to

Pelham Hill with them. Mr. Wheeler said as I came in, 'Here comes a boy whose hats I like to get.' He gave me 'fo' punce' a piece for them (six and a quarter cents), and I carried back six dollars and a quarter in cash, - and Harriet says I bought myself some clothes with the money.

"These hats were pressed and made ready for the market in East Amherst and sold all over the country.

"Near the Enfield line, two miles or more by the road but about a mile 'cross-lots, was a neighborhood called Packardsville. Here was a carriage-shop and a little Baptist church with sporadic preaching by tramp preachers, but no Sunday School, no instruction, simply an intermittent Sunday service.

"It was here that I went to singing school and learned a few notes of Greenville and those other musical accomplishments which have afforded my children so much amusement.

"The school house where I went was a mile from home, north, on the road to Pelham Centre, near the house of Squire Kingman, the 'big' man of the community. The school house where I really belonged was south, near or in Packardsville, but the road was poor and long and I chose to go to the other. The last time I was in Pelham, a few years ago, I found that the two school districts had been united and the one school house was situated in the very lane that used to lead to our old home!

"But I went to school only two short winter terms, with Ransom Allen and E. Towne for teachers, simply going over again what I had learned in Dudley. The other winters the schools were so poor that I did not care to go. It was a cold bitter walk to the north, and once I froze my ears solid, and in 1845 I was taken sick at school and got home with difficulty to go to bed with lung-fever. I often used to eat my lunch on my way to school to get rid of carrying it and then I would come home ravenous at night.

"Practically I got nothing from common schools after leaving Dudley, but I read everything I would lay my hands on. I had the reading of a weekly Northampton paper called the *Hampshire Gazette* and later I saw the Amherst paper, *Hampshire* and *Franklin Express.* I remember the first number of this. The stage brought it to Knight's corner. I went for it and carried it to Squire Gold who lived beyond, - but meanwhile I read it all through, advertisements and all! We were allowed the reading for the delivery.

"How I hated the life there! I felt, without explaining it, the narrow outlook, the uncongenial atmosphere and the lack of privilege. I got on well enough with the boys, but there was not one who felt as I did or who had ambitions for something better. I vented my feelings during these years in the following doggerel!

"When Adam left his Eden fair
And wandered forth abroad,
He chanced to find old Pelham Hill
And there at last fixed his abode.
And sure, thought he, I'm up so high
Satan will search for me in vain,
He ne're will come so near the sky
For fear he won't get back again.
But Adam was a mistaken dunce;
For Satan soon did come
He took poor Adam off at once
And made old Pelham Hill his home."



This 1855 print depicting a woman braiding a palm leaf hat is one of the few existing records of the craft. (Yankee, July 1981. Geo. Burnett)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Letters from Alfred S. Romer of Harvard University, dated August 29, 1969:

Dear Mrs. Elliott:

Thank you very much for your interesting letter, I am not a native of these parts, coming from the Hudson River Valley, but have always liked the region. I went to college at Amherst and bought an old farm there many years ago in the Pelham hills to use as a summer place and a place to retire. (I am technically retired at Harvard but still have to spend a lot of time there, since I have an active laboratory working on my material). I got quite interested in the history of Pelham and have been doing more or less work on that whenever I can spare the time.

I am sorry to say that the Lyman Rowland autobiography is not in print. It exists in typewritten form. A granddaughter of his lived in Oberlin, Ohio, where my sister-in-law was long a professor, and I heard about it a couple of decades ago. This past spring I wrote to her daughter, in California, and she was kind enough to xerox the part of the autobiography relating to Pelham for me, and I put it out as a mimeographed set of notes to be distributed to the recently formed Pelham Historical Society.

(Signed) A.S. Romer

2. New Hampshire and other New England states proclaimed Fast Days for prayer for the well being of some public official. A sermon or service was unheard of on Fast Day in Pelham, MA, in 1841. New Hampshire was still observing its Fast Day in 1979. (Yankee, Inc., Dublin, N.H., Aug. 1979.)



Woman in cloth adaptation of Shaker bonnet, milking a cow. ("Dairy Collectibles," W.R. Hoard)

ABOUT STRAW HATS

Based on Material from George B. Burnett, Descendant of the Founder of the Burnett Hat Factories in Amherst, MA

In the early 1800's, when women were supposed to do the weaving and making of family clothes in their "spare time" they learned of another skill they could use at home that would bring in some "hard cash" – the home woven or braided straw hat. The practice spread like wild fire in the hill towns of New England and in the next ten years it became a full blown "cottage industry" which rapidly worked into first, a partial, and then a total factory operation. "Of all the 19th century industrial ventures, the straw hat business had the greatest economic impact and longest life that marked 19th century Amherst(1)."

George Burnett writes that the idea was started by two women yearning for a bonnet of French design in John Whipple's store window in Providence, R.I. It was post-revolutionary days and many were short on funds. One, Betsy Metcalf, searched her father's barn until she found a straw that she could use – rye straw. Her completed bonnet won compliments from her friends who learned the skill from her. (Naomi Whipple also worked out a bonnet.) It is difficult for us to realize the practice became so popular that some people worried about a rye straw famine. Furthermore, at least one minister preached against the weaving of bonnets as a "sin of vanity(2)." By 1947 some writers expressed their concern that the "singular mortality(3)" of young women in the past decade might be due to their breathing in the dust of the palm leaves or rye straw, hour after hour. It took a woman three-quarters of a day to make a bonnet. The skillful woman (and child) could weave into the evening past twilight. Housewives bartered their cottage-made hats at the stores for household supplies.

One report says that women in the hill towns invented the "harvest hat" for men, a round model, high-crowned with brim, worn commonly by farmers in New England(4). It was to become a mainstay of the Burnett factories(5). The straw hat made of straw stiffened at the factory was worn for dress occasions.



Woman wearing individually styled straw hat in 1910.

It, along with the felt hat, largely disappeared from the scene in the early sixties when the men of the nation followed President John Kennedy's boyish abandonment of the hat[6]. The general revolt of youth in the 1960's was to affect what adults thought and wore. The custom of women wearing hats to church, teas, shopping as a necessity was given up.

Home braiding of hats was a kind of piece work — a woman's thing, until a husband discovered a nice profit in selling his wife's extra hats. (There's a story in that evening's discussion). Men set up "straw shops where the home braided hats could be finished, blocked, sized, and packed for sale." Agents were hired, eventually traveling as far west as St. Louis, taking orders for hats. Amherst by now was the leading hat center in the nation. Braiding machines were introduced — sennet straw could be woven by machine. "Those same hands that had braided miles of straw at home were equally good at weaving imported palm leaves from the West Indies, or sewing hats, in the city shops." Young women by the hundreds gravitated into hat factories of centers such as North Dana, Foxboro, Walpole, Framingham and Royalston. (A poem sent by George Burnett, its author unknown, of the "Straw Shop Girl" portrays the factory life of these young workers.) The average straw shop in the mid-1800's employed 40 employees (some of whom were men to do the heavy work of opening bales of straw and shipping the finished product), who serviced the output of 250 home workers. As machines were developed to do more of the hard work, the ratio rapidly shifted to the factory side.

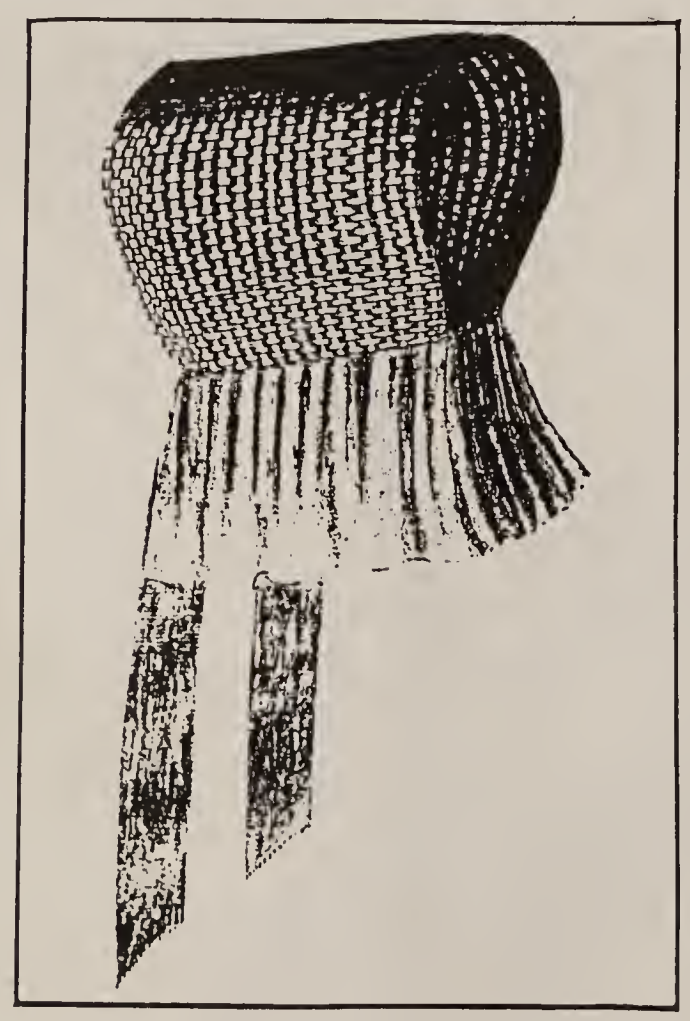
Leonard M. Hills in 1829 located the first shop in East Amherst. "He soon recognized that the Amherst area was ripe for its own hat shop. The new palm leaf products were in demand and skilled hands were available. Amherst need depend on eastern shops no longer. The successes of the Hills Co. under the leadership of Leonard M. Hills, his son Henry F., and his grandson Leonard M., are well recorded in the town histories. The firm of Hills & Sons made one to two hundred thousand dozen of palm-leaf hats, and from thirty to forty thousand dozen shaker hoods per year. Their importations some years amounted to more than a million and a half of leaves[7].

Mr. Hills' elegant house was to become the property of the Women's Club of Amherst. They graciously hosted an Amherst string quartet in the 1920's which gave the musicians a chance to see the beautiful wood carvings and high-ceilinged rooms.

The Burnetts also conducted a hat business for three generations. George Burnett became a salesman in the hat district in New York City first, then did a superior job as agent, traveling by stage coach or horseback past St. Louis. Working on a five percent commission, he became wealthy, formed his own company, George B. Burnett and Son in 1882. His son, William Albert, ran the store while the father continued selling. They came to Amherst in 1892 and purchased the H.D. Fearing Company, William managing it also. The bulk of their business, one source says, was the "harvest hat" trade. Next they bought an O.H. Goodman plant in North Dana which served as a feeder plant for their Amherst factory which "finished" the hats.

One day the North Dana plant caught on fire. "A load of Amherst plant men dash up steep and long Pelham Hill, down around Prescott Mountain, and into North Dana to fight it." Presumably, the fire wagon was pulled by horses — some of it was saved as it is reported when "the state bought the site for Quabbin Reservoir the remnants of the shop were moved to Shirley and reconstructed as a state workshop.

"But by 1924, when William Burnett died the hat business all over was feeling the pinch of foreign competition. Labor costs were only 75 cents a hat in Italy against several dollars in this country." Many styles of hats evolved from different kinds of straw used from all over the world. Split palm became popular because of its lightness, then became imported from Puerto Rico. (Cont. p 81)



Shaker straw bonnet "woven of palm and straw and finished with a cloth flounce." (from ***Shaker Hands*** *by Jane Spriggs.)*



Girls in factory, weaving Panama hats. (World Book encyclopedia, 1954.)



The Hills Company in East Amherst, photo 1905. W.H. Atkins worked here around 1890, after morning chores, in the packing box division. (It is believed the work day was a 10-hour day.) (Jones Library)

"The Straw Shop Girl"

• • • • •

From quiet homes of comfort
From all along the strand
They come, with souls determined
To earn what'er they can,
And get a pile of money
Before they get a man.

From early morn 'til twilight
And often later still,
Through Spring and Autumn changes,
And Winter drear and chill,
They line and crimp, and pucker,
Ticket, wire, and trim,
And try to keep up courage
Though the pay is rather slim;

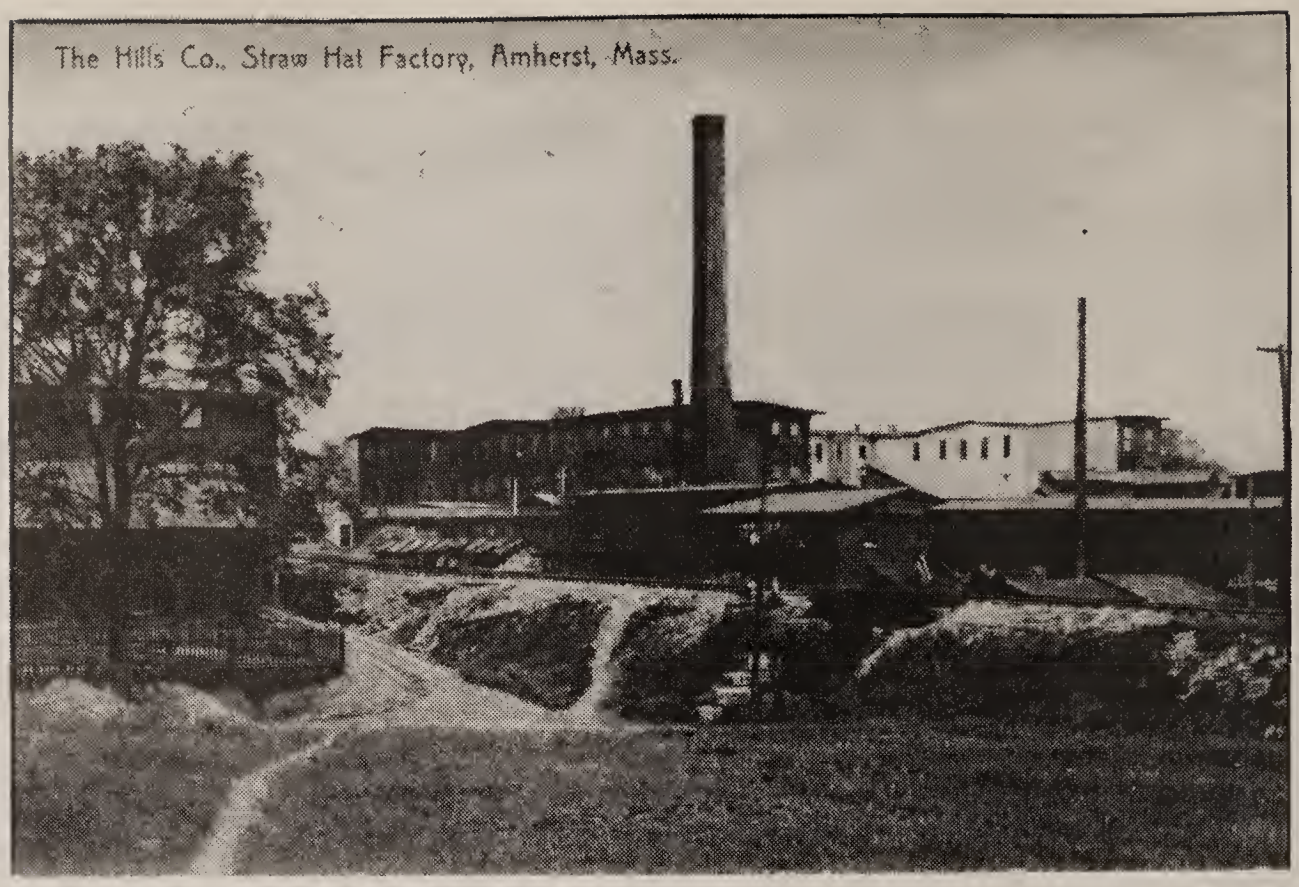
They ache, and sweat, and shiver
Shiver, cough, and ache,
And it costs so much for bees wax,
A thread will often break,
Alexis, Kirkwood, Wayelet,
Cecil and Saratoga,
Rough and Ready, and Shoo Fly,
They styles I can't name over,
And it takes more brains to make them
Than most of them will cover.

O! the dread initiations
Of strangers in the shop,
And the idle criticisms
The careless ones will drop:
She is not very pretty!
How stiff she walks, I'm sure!
I hope she dresses funny!
Her father must be poor!
But these are only trifles,
To give amusement merely,
When all get well acquainted
They love each other dearly.

Such petty tribulations
Are soon forgotten, quite,
But not the heartless comments
Outsiders circulate.
I've heard the poor mechanic,
And often silly fops,
Speak sneeringly of women
Because they work in shops.
Yet, in all our cities
One cannot fail to see
Men occupying places
Where women ought to be.
If men are really better,
What is the difference, pray?

• • • • •

Poem from a chapter, "Every Day But Sunday," from an ***Industrial History of Mansfield, Mass.,*** *1936. Poem now in public domain. (Sent by George Burnett, Walpole, Mass., 1981.)*



The Hills Co. Straw Hat Factory, Amherst. Postcard photo 1905. **"Some folks work-**



While other folks play." *Crowd gathered around pond at Mass. "Aggie" awaiting rope pull to start. Everyone wears a straw hat. 1920*

Although G. Brinton Burnett, a man of integrity and president of the company at his father's death, was well prepared to run the family business, six other Burnett children were interested in the inheritance. It seemed expedient to settle the estate, but this was the era of the Depression. Over the next ten years no sale of the Burnett Hat Factory was made to operating buyers. "Most of the plant was dismantled. Of the two remaining structures at the Dickinson Street site (besides the factory boarding house at the end of Spring Street) the brick building marks the foundry end of the plant, the other is the old, red horse barn next to the College Street underpass. This housed the dray horses that pulled the big flatbed wagons of hat cases up College Street and down to the B & M freight yard. Others were loaded directly at the Central Vermont siding. . . .It is rumored many Amherst family rooms and dens are paneled with the wide chestnut boards from the dismantled hat shops.

"This marked the end of a regional industry, one favored with an unusual camaraderie for a highly competitive business. When George Brinton Burnett, the founder, died in New York in 1919, all six of his pallbearers, including Leonard Hills of Amherst, were heads of the largest hat firms.

"The final blow to industry in Amherst was not due solely to men changing their ritualistic hat habits of a hundred years. Amherst was also changing.

"Factory whistles, once the crowing cocks of a healthy community, became public nuisances. Those who had built homes next to established bleacheries also complained bitterly about the smell. Banks that once were happy to collect interest on short term loans . . . for raw materials for the coming year's work were no longer interested. . . .

"Amherst was going cultural. Gone were the interplant softball games at Hitchcock field. The spirit of Kelley Square and Crow Hill was in a decline. The previous balance of 'town and gown' was slipping under the gown. To paraphrase Dorothy Thompson's famous remark, 'Culture is not always a thinking proposition.'.

"Amherst is justly proud of her educational and literary heritage. It is also true that towns, as with individuals, must have a visible means of support to thrive. I doubt that Amherst will prove the exception."

Footnotes:

1. All quotations in this article are credited to George B. Burnett, great-grandson of the founder, 1913-1983. He belonged to the Amherst High School Class of 1931, present at its reunion in 1981 and agreed to send the story of the Burnett hat industry in Amherst. (Perhaps few know that the Jones Library was enriched by the generous gifts of many fine paintings from the Burnett family.)

2. George Burnett's article on straw hats.

3. Daniel Lombardo, "A Look Back," Amherst Bulletin, 4/17/85.

4. Material sent by George Burnett.

5. Ibid.

6. Blame the demise of the straw hat on President J.F. Kennedy. He wore no hat, and the average man copied him. "Straw Hat Week," before JFK, was celebrated during the first half of May in men's stores, and May 15 was the date to recognize the arrival of summer and "to don" your straw hat. (Robert Burns of Spoo and Son, Haberdashers, Madison, WI, 1985.)

7. From Business Directory of the Town of Amherst, 1869, p. 21.

THANKSGIVING BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF PAST YEARS

By Marjorie Atkins Elliott

One of my treasures is the memory of past Thanksgivings all rolled together.

It was a time for the joining of kinfolk and guests, of bountiful food, of relaxed grownups and a full house. The meal would be lengthy with a run-around the house by the children before dessert.

The day shone with smiles and laughter. How could I thank or tell my elders how grateful I would be all my life for their having set apart this day from the work week when our families were united in one house, when Aunt Mary welcomed with body hugs her nieces and nephews home from college, and the table stretched to make room for everybody! I can hear my father's deep voice as he talked with my uncle, smell the oyster stew, see uncle carve the turkey, and remember the pies waiting on the pantry shelves.

And then, ponder, what was it in my aunt that made her so special, her lined face so beautiful, so full of meaning? I could not fathom it then. I remember hearing my father's "Blessing," the moment of silence that followed, and how I sensed that I had missed it at college — or wherever I was living then. Now I see afresh the strength, the set of values he lived by, inscribed in his face. I hear the love in the tones of mother's voice . . . what beautiful people! They had more than philosophies . . . they had faith.

Years have passed when I in turn added leaves to the table and guests to the list . . . when my family returned to its roots. Still I could not visualize the day when I would be the grandmother, and a baby in my arms would become the mother of one I shall hold this Thanksgiving!

Something of the old unity, love and trust sweeps over me. May we, you and I on this Thanksgiving day as we gather around the table, not miss the opportunity of reaching someone with a smile, a supportive word, a touch that will enrich memories of Thanksgiving in years to come!



Geo. Burnett carving the Thanksgiving turkey. (Mrs. Geo. Burnett)

A 1779 THANKSGIVING DAY IN NEW ENGLAND
by Juliana Smith

(The following account of a Thanksgiving dinner in 1779 is used with the permission of a descendant of Juliana Smith, Louise Marston of Madison, Wisconsin. The letter was copied into the diary of Cousin Betsey, who received it, "a praiseworthy practice not uncommon when letters were written with care and might easily be lost in transmission." It is presumed Juliana was a daughter of the Rev. C.M. Smith's older brother, Dan.)

"After the usual number of apologies for delay in writing Juliana proceeds:

When Thanksgiving Day was approaching, our dear Grandmother Smith (nee Jerusha Mather, great-granddaughter of the Rev. Richard Mather of Dorchester, Massachusetts), who is sometimes a little desponding of Spirit as you well know, did her best to persuade us that it would be better to make it a Day of Feasting & Prayer in view of the Wickedness of our Friends & the Vileness of our Enemies, I am sure you can hear Grandmother say that and see her shake her cap border. But indeed there was some occasion for her remarks, for our resistance to an unjust Authority has cost our beautiful Coast Towns very dear the last year & all of us have had much to suffer. But my dear Father brought her to a more proper frame of Mind, so that by the time the Day came she was ready to enjoy it almost as well as Grandmother Worthington did, and she, you will remember, always sees the bright side. In the mean while we had all of us been working hard to get all things in readiness to do honour to the Day.

"This year it was Uncle Simeon's turn to have the dinner at his house, but of course we all helped them as they help us when it is our turn, & there is always enough for us all to do. All the baking of pies & cakes was done at our house & we had the big oven heated & filled twice each day for three days before it was all done & everything was GOOD, though we did have to do without some things that ought to be used. Neither Love nor (paper) Money could buy Raisins, but our good red cherries dried without the pits, did almost as well & happily Uncle Simeon still had some spices in store. The tables were set in the Dining Hall and even that big room had no space to spare when we were all seated. The Servants had enough ado to get around the Tables & serve us all without over-setting things. There were our two Grandmothers side by side. They are always handsome old Ladies, but now, many thought, they were handsomer than ever, & happy they were to look around upon so many of their descendants. Uncle & Aunt Simeon presided at one Table, & Father & Mother at the other. Besides us five boys & girls there were two of the Galen & three Elmera, besides James Browne & Ephraim Cowles. (Five of the last-named seven were orphans taught and in all ways provided for by Parson & Mrs. Smith.) We had them at our table because they could be best supervised there. Most of the students had gone to their own homes for the week, but Mr. Skiff & Mr. _____ (name illegible) were too far away from their home. They sat at Uncle Simeon's table & so did Uncle Paul & his family, five of them in all, & Cousins Phin & Poll (probably Phineas and Apollos Smith, sons of Dan). Then there were six of the Livingston family next door. They had never seen a Thanksgiving Dinner before, having been used to keep Christmas Day instead, as is the wont in New York Province. Then there were four Old Ladies who have no longer Homes or Children of their own & so came to us. They were invited by my Mother, but Uncle and Aunt Simeon wished it so.

"Of course we could have no Roast Beef. None of us have tasted Beef this three years back as it all must go to the Army, & too little they get, poor fellows. But, Nayquittymaw's Hunters were able to get us a fine red Deer, so that we had a good haunch of Venison on each Table. These were balanced by huge Chines of Roast Pork at the other ends of the Tables. Then there was on one a big Roast Turkey & on the other a Goose, & two big Pigeon Pasties. Then there was an abundance of good Vegetables of all the old sorts & one which I do not believe you have yet seen. Uncle Simeon had imported the Seede from England just before the War began & only this Year was there enough for Table use. It is called Sellery & you eat it without cooking. It is very good served with meats. Next year Uncle Simeon says he will be able to raise enough to give us all some. It has to be taken up, roots & all & buried in earth in the cellar through the winter & only pulling up some when you want it to use.

"Our Mince Pies were good although we had to use dried Cherries as I told you, & the meat was shoulder of Venisson, instead of Beef. The Pumpkin Pies, Apple Tarts & big Indian Puddings lacked for nothing save Appetite by the time we had got around to them.

"Of course we had no Wine. Uncle Simeon has still a cask or two, but it must all be saved for the sick & indeed, for those who are well, good Cider is a sufficient Substitute. There was no Plumb Pudding, but a boiled Suet Pudding, stirred thick with dried Plumbs & Cherries, was called by the old Name & answered the purpose. All the other spice had been used in the Mince Pies, so for this Pudding we used a jar of West India preserved Ginger which chanced to be left of the last shipment which Uncle Simeon had from there. We chopped the Ginger small and stirred it through with the Plumbs & Cherries. It was extraordinary good. The Day was bitter cold & when we got home from Meeting, which Father did not keep over long by reason of the cold, we were glad eno' of the fire in Uncle's Dining Hall, but by the time the dinner was one half over those of us who were on the fire side of one Table was forced to get up & carry our plates with us around to the far side of the other Table, while those who had sat there were as glad to bring their plates around to the fire side to get warm. All but the Old Ladies who had a screen put behind their chairs."

"Uncle Simeon," proceeds Juliana, "was in his best mood, and you know how good that is! He kept both Tables in a roar of laughter with his droll stories of the days when he was studying medicine in Edinborough, & afterwards he & Father & Uncle Paul joined in singing Hymns & Ballads. You know how fine their voices go together. Then we all sang a Hymn & afterwards my dear Father led us in prayer, remembering all Absent Friends before the Throne of Grace, & much I wished that my dear Betsey was here as one of us, as she has been of yore.

"We did not rise from the Table until it was quite dark, & then when the dishes had been cleared away we all got round the fire as close as we could, & cracked nuts, & sang songs & told stories. At least some told & others listened. You know nobody can exceed the two Grandmothers at telling tales of all the things they have seen themselves, & repeating those of the early years in New England, & even some in the Old England, which they had heard in their youth from their Elders. My Father says it is a goodly custom to hand down all worthy deeds & traditions from Father to Son, as the Israelites were commanded to do about the Passover & as the Indians here have always done, because the Word that is spoken is remembered longer than the one that is written. . . . Brother Jack, who did not reach here until late on Wednesday though he had left College very early on Monday Morning & rode with all due diligence considering the snow, brought an orange to each of the Grand-Mothers, but, Alas! they were frozen in his saddle bags. We soaked the frost out in cold water, but I guess they wasn't as good as they should have been."

Wedding Gowns, 1851-1951, Modeled by Thursday Club

Springfield Union
2/12/52



Modeling the pure silk gown worn by Mrs. A. E. Humphrey of Northampton at her wedding in 1893, is Mrs. George Jung.

Wedding Gowns Of 100 Years Shown In S.A.

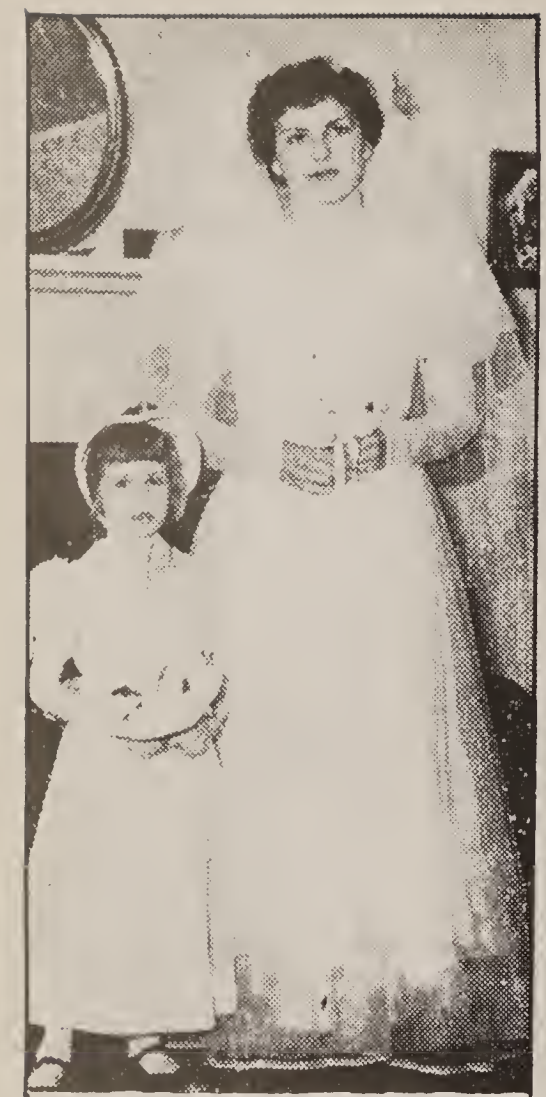
Wedding fashions in the United States from 1851 to 1951 were displayed before the South Amherst Thursday Club on February 14 when several members modeled gowns worn by brides in the past one hundred years. Mrs. William H. Davenport and Mrs. Herbert C. Hutchings, Jr., arranged the style revue, given at the home of Mrs. Norman G. MacLeod of South East Street, and an accompanying commentary was written and given by Mrs. Davenport.



Mrs. W. S. Hawley, of South Amherst, wore this white satin dress at her wedding in November, 1895. The dress, featuring leg o'mutton sleeves, is modeled by Mrs. Philip Stedman.



Mrs. Philip Ives, in her mother-in-law's 1899 wedding gown, and Mrs. Henry Stoughton hold the shawl and train which were part of Mrs. Stoughton's wedding dress in 1925. At the right, Mrs. David Stedman models another dress of the 20's, that worn by her mother in 1924. Behind Mrs. Stedman, Miss Judy Adair holds the train.



Mrs. Philip Ives' bridal gown, modeled here by Mrs. Wilbur Shumway, was worn on June 30, 1940. Miss Judy Adair stands at the left.



Most recent of the gowns was that of Mrs. David Stedman who models the princess style wedding dress she wore in 1951.



Mrs. Gordon Neylon displays a pink wedding gown belonging to Mrs. George Jung's sister, Mrs. William Raschi of Springfield, who wore it in 1942.



The white faille gown of Mrs. Reuben Hannus, worn at her wedding at the Shelburne Congregational Church in June, 1942, is modeled by Mrs. John O'Hearn. At the right, Mrs. Rene Moreau wears her own wedding gown of the Queen Elizabeth period. Mrs. Moreau was married in 1950.



Displaying the 1908 wedding dress of Mrs. Walter Hatch of North Amherst is Mrs. Connie Nanartonis. The Gibson Girl influence is evident in Mrs. Hatch's dress.



Mrs. Gordon Scotland wears the wedding gown of Mrs. William Atkins. Worn originally in 1911, the dress was again used by Mrs. Atkins' daughter, Marjorie, in 1941.



The wedding dress of Mrs. Leslie Cromack, made for her home wedding in Conway, Massachusetts, in December, 1917, is worn by her daughter, Mrs. Reuben Hannus.

This dress, modeled by Mrs. Robert Adair, was worn by Mrs. Charles Miller at her wedding in W. H. Atkins' home in October, 1905.

The wedding gown of Mrs. John Warner Davenport Boyle, worn in 1902, was made of oyster white Skinner satin. Mrs. Herbert C. Hutchings, Jr., models the dress.



THE SO. AMHERST SCHOOL
AT THE GREEN
1764-1901
Pupils of old building, in 1896-1897

By Marjorie Atkins Elliott

This photograph is believed to be the only one of the school house on the Green that underwent changes but few repairs. Close scrutiny reveals bricks missing from the top of the chimney and the right front window without shutters. The pile of wood at the left has been split — this was March — to be put into woodshed behind, door of which opens inward. No one today can tell us where the outhouses were, behind the woodshed or if they were the two small buildings on the hill. This photograph was generously mailed by George Morell in 1974 from Palo Alto, California. He is the third boy in the back row wearing a peaked cap.

Pictured 1896-97 are: Back Row (l. to r.): Rosanna Brothers — lived near the brick yard by the railroad tracks, north of Station Road; Joe Moriarty — (Buczala's today) lived on Bay Road; George Morell — lived in the former Oren Williams house (across Common), burned in 1898; Claude Chapman — lived on South East Street in later Rak (Rock) house that burned; Rossa Messier — across railroad tracks, beyond orchards on Station Road; Carl Merrill — lived with Charles Shaw; Tom Moriarty (Buczala house today) Bay Road; Miss Nichols — teacher; Alice Marsh, between Shumway's and Cowles' on South East Street; Lena Chapman — sister of Claude; Mary Smith — lived in the Dwight house on the Green now owned by the Manfredi, Sadie Main — lived on upper South East Street; Charles Smith — brother of Mary and Elsie Smith; Angie Sherman — lived north of Ezbecki on West Street; Elsie Smith, sister of Mary Smith; Helen Dwight — sister to Clara and Florence Dwight, lived in the "Tonteen" house now owned by the Laurence Elys.

Front Row (l. to r.): Henry Shumway, brother to Win and Cliff Shumway, sons of Wilbur, Middle Street; Victor Girard — lived east of Messiers on Station Road; Louisa Brothers, sister to Rosanna; Lila Girard, sister to Victor; Julia Maloney — lived third small house from West Street on Bay Road; Lulu Marsh, sister to Alice Marsh, (married Frank LeDoyt); Percy Dickinson, son of Albert Dickinson, lived in the former William Lyman house; Ernest Dickinson, son of Timothy Dickinson, lived in the house next to and south of the parsonage. Identification was provided by George Morell, of Palo Alto, Calif.; Myra and Clara Dwight of Shays Street and Lena Chapman Mory (Mill-site Farm) supplied additional information.

THE OLD VILLAGE SCHOOL

Amherst Record
Aug. 11, 1966
by Florence Dwight

edited by M. Elliott

The location of the South Amherst seat of learning for the youngest children was always where the 1901 building is now - across the Common, only our old building was nearer the road. All human habitations were once placed close to the highway. If there was any passing-by, the occupants wanted a good view of it.

It was not a little red school house; it was a one-room, low, Cape Cod brick building painted cream color which had long since become dirty and dull for want of fresh paint. When I read of the millions of dollars voted for schools nowadays, I think of our old building which the town could not afford to keep in repair. The old school house was taken down sixty years ago and replaced by the one that sits there now.

Our playground was the Common across from the school. There, before the plants became thoroughly crushed by the scampering children, most of us got a good dose of poison ivy.

Our pet game was "Pom-pom-pull-away", a kind of tag, and we often played "wild horse", called "cowboy" now. The West, at that time, had not been tamed, so we heard fascinating tales of the animals running wild and free on the prairie. The boys made lassos which they used with an adept flourish to capture ostensibly frightened and protesting girls.

At nine o'clock the bell rang and everyone made a wild dash for the door. Like all of those old school houses, you walked first into a narrow entry room. All along the walls were hooks for wraps some placed up a distance from the floor, others lower to be within reach of the little children. The rest of the space was for us scuffling kids to get ourselves ready to enter the big room.

Piece de resistance in the entry way was a wooden waterpail sitting on the floor just at the entrance to the main room. The water in that pail was heavensent refreshment for hot, panting children when they came bursting in from the playground.

The boys used to swing off with that pail to pump it full from a neighbor's well in the yard. In winter they did not go very often and the water got to a low point in the pail and frequently a thin sheet of ice covered the surface. Nevertheless, if we were thirsty (and we always were) we dipped in and came up with a dipper filled with splinters, but we sipped eagerly around the splinters and reveled in that cold drink.

Probably there were more germs to the cubic inch in those two gallons of water than in any other water in the country. But germs we had never heard of and we drank millions of them. Perhaps because they were unknown to us we were immune. Anyway, we survived.

The bigger room was like those in all old schools. There were about 20 screwed-down, battered, initialed desks for the pupils, and a platform in front on which stood the teacher's desk. A large oblong stove and a well-filled wood box occupied the area to the north. A recitation settee under the windows took up the space to the south front. At the back was a secretary which contained precious and sparingly used paper, something the children of today would not understand.

A map was sometimes drawn down over the front blackboard but, on Monday morning. It was always way up to the top so that we could plainly read the week's memory gem written in the teacher's flawless script.

I remember one; "People good at making excuses are seldom good for anything else." Instead of pondering that "gem" for my own improvement I immediately fitted it to someone else in the community.

When I see the number and variety of reading books that are furnished to children today, I am always amazed. Dimly I remember the First Reader with its picture of the cat making for the barn. "Cat. I see the cat. The cat can run."

The contents of the other readers, of course, graduated in difficulty. The more advanced were made up of parts of the classics, several poems and a few stupid stories. One story was titled "Handsome Is That Handsome Does". It was about a plain girl being much more virtuous than the pretty one. Of course, all the time I was attracted to the pretty one and cared nothing for the noble character of the plain girl.

One teacher must have been advanced in education because she had us learn a poem by Emily Dickinson, the Amherst poetess. It was "Sunrise and Sunset" and I remember every word of it, to this day.

We learned other valuable lessons. We learned how to cope with primitive conditions. (It wasn't hard because our homes were primitive.) The school had no flush toilets; the wooden pail certainly was no "fountain"; the heating system was not exactly "central".

The heat radiated from the big stove in the north corner. When we were small we sat in our long underwear close to the stove and our cheeks were fiery red and bursting with the heat. When we were older we sat in the back and shivered and shook from the cold winds coming through the cracks of the old building.

All the blackboards were cracked. I remember doing a long-division example on the blackboard. Halfway through I had great difficulty bringing down my subtraction over the crack. That wasn't the worst of it. The example was long and before I finished it, I ran into another crack even wider than the first one.

Our teachers were good. One of them, Cora Church, had the reputation of being the best teacher in town, and I can well believe that she may have been the best in the state. She was wonderful.



Miss Cora Church as she appeared in 1896 while a teacher in South Amherst Grammar School - in the old building, and 1901 in the new.

Another teacher, Nellie Cooley, came from as far away as North Amherst. I think she was not a slave to her profession, but she surely won our hearts at Christmas time. Day after day for weeks, she sat up in front industriously sewing on some pretty material.

The day before we went home for the holidays she presented each pupil with a gift. Mine, like that of all the other little girls, was a lovely doll arrayed in one of the dresses she had been making. It had golden hair and brown eyes, and the little pink tarleton dress Miss Cooley had so lovingly made, was a real dress. It could come-off and go on . . .

The teaching of music was in the curriculum. A Mr. Charmbury visited the school periodically and with his tuning fork started us off on our music lessons. He wore interesting side whiskers and lived up to his name, for his merry smile charmed us all.

Every spring we had a great treat. People who had maple trees tapped them and boiled-down the sap into syrup. A generous neighbor always presented the school with a gallon of maple syrup. Snow was always available back of the Congregational Church where the sun never got to it.



Milt Williams of Deerfield. He says, "Forty to fifty gallons of sap boiled down make one gallon of syrup. . . . My price is still $20 a gallon. They used to say 'a gallon of syrup should be worth the price of a man's labor for a day,' but it ain't anymore." (Amherst Bulletin, March 2, 1983)

The syrup was heated on the stove and ladled out in a thin, undulating stream, to harden into "wax" on our waiting plates of snow. Later I read about the Greek gods who live on nectar and ambrosia. I knew exactly how it tasted because I had had it every spring in the primary school.

Once measles swept through the village. No doubt the sharing of the school dipper had something to do with the spread of the epidemic. To have measles was expected. . . .

The South Amherst Green was a good place to start our education. I liked the teachers and loved the companionship of my schoolmates. There came a time when we had to leave the Common for good, but like all children we wasted no time in regrets. We had passed and were eligible to enter the grownup Grammar School down the road on Middle Street.(3)

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1. Faced east.

2. Armstrongs lived in house to south of school.

3. The Grammar School stood at the corner of Middle and Potwine, south of the cemetery. It was used until 1902 and burned in 1910. Picture in Book I page 84.

Dear Mrs. Elliott: Ontario, Calif. Aug. 22, 1964

A day or so ago I received a letter from Clara Dwight, with your letter enclosed. Glad to hear from you again. I write few letters now days, as most of the time I seem to be afflicted with acute laziness. Nina likes to write letters, so I've appointed her as chief correspondent for the family. You ask if I still subscribe to the Amherst paper. Since I migrated from the old state in October 1901, and for a quite a time following that time, I can't remember having subscribed to it at all, but it seems the folks occasionally sent me copies. I promised my mother when I came west I'd write to her every week if she would write that often, and she faithfully kept her promise as long as her mind was working, and then my father took over. My first job was in Mexico where the mail service wasn't exactly 100% perfect. One time I received no mail for seven weeks, then I got seven letters all at once. The back room of the post office there was at that time piled high with sacks of mail, and the entire force closed up the place and went to a bull fight. Later I worked at RR jobs out on the desert, where my mail arrived occasionally or not at all. My mother kept a lot of my letters which I now have and they recall many events which I had long since forgotten. I remember when Miss Shovelton was teacher at the grammar school at Potwine and Middle streets; she was boarding at the Bridgman place. She came to our house for supper one night (at the Poor farm), and Mother told my sister Kate and me to take the lantern and escort her home. I didn't like her at all as it seemed to my youthful mind that whenever she felt the need of exercise she would whale the stuffing out of me. Well, she kissed us both when we left and soon as I got home I, for the first time in my life, washed my face without being told to. I never did care much for her. Well, I'd like to see South Amherst again, but have no expectation to as we realize most of our travelling days are over. However, I'm always glade to hear from those who can tell about the changes going on there. Hope by this time you are up and going again. Regards to you all from

Carl Dickinson

THINGS FORBIDDEN THE PUPILS

1. To mar the counters, seats or walls of the school room, or any of the rooms—the outside of the main building, or any of the out buildings or fences, neither by cutting, marking or scratching the same with any instrument whatever.

2. To step upon any seat, counter, chair or window sill-to get in or out at a window, or to indulge in running, scuffling or any boisterous exercise in the school building.

3. To smoke or chew tobacco in or about the school house.

4. To enter without special permission, for any purpose, the premises of any of the neighbors.

5. To use vulgar, obscene or profane language in or about the buildings or premises, or to exhibit any immoral book, picture or representation in the presence of any scholar of the school.

6. To remove the chair, table or settees from the places designated by the teacher.

Rules in 1890.



Grammar school, built 1861, in constant use until 1902, stood at the northeast corner of the junction of Potwine and Middle Street, on Cook's land. The flag flies from the pole, and wood for the stove is piled in the open shed. Building burned down in 1910. (Clara Dwight)

SOUTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL 1861-1902

Amherst Journal Record
November 15, 1962,
by Kathleen King Hayes
edited by M. Elliott

On March 26, 1860 it was voted at an Amherst town meeting to establish grammar schools in North and South Amherst which were to be kept open six months in each year, the fall and winter terms.

South Grammar school, 1862-1902, was built as a result of this action. It stood on Potwine lane, between South East and Middle streets, on property now owned by Herbert F. Cook. Note the pump left of the building, and the woodpile which fed its one stove. The evergreen trees, in the right background, still stand in the cemetery on South East street. The young tree in the foreground, planted there during Arbor day exercises in 1895 also grows near the old cellar hole.

Mary Thayer Wheelock of Bay road, who attended this school, took part in the exercises that day. She recalls how a classmate named Mabel Joy recited a poem which ended, "He who plants a tree plants a joy."

This grammar school was in use until 1902 when the present brick school facing the South Amherst Green was opened to accommodate both primary and grammar school pupils.

Before the new school opened there were three primary schools in the area, preparing pupils for South Grammar. The South Green primary (1764-1901), a one room brick building, stood just south of the present two room school but nearer the road. The South East primary (a succession of wood then brick buildings) was located (1791-1905) on the west side of South East street near Bay road; the West Street primary (1792-1894) stood on the west side of West street several hundred feet south of Potwine lane.

Herbert C. Hutchings remembers spending the spring term of 1902 at South Grammar at Potwine finishing out sixth grade because the South East primary near Bay road had been partially burned during spring vacation. That school, rebuilt, was later converted into an annex for the Mountain Range Sanitarium, run by Dr. Mary Sanderson, then into a residence owned by Joseph Kershlis.

Lena Chapman Mory of Middle street attended three South Amherst schools but had only two teachers in nine years. Her teacher at South Green primary, for six years, was Miss Jennie Nichols; at South Grammar at Potwine, for one year, it was Miss Cora B. Church. When the consolidated school on the Green opened the next year, Lena transferred with Miss Church and all grammar scholars. Her last year, ninth grade, was also Miss Church's last year at the South Amherst (Green) school.

Old schools had been built at a minimum expense and were in constant need of repairs.

A report of the Amherst school committee in 1886 comments unfavorably on conditions. Repairs to defective foundations at the South Grammar and South East schools were deferred "partly because of the scarcity and increased cost of brick." The 1890 report states that "the South Grammar room is undoubtedly the coldest of all. We have recently had the stove changed to a better position in the room and have had storm windows put on the west side, but the room is too large for one stove."

In 1892: "the condition of the South Grammar school (at Potwine) is altogether too bad. It requires new ceiling, new blackboards, new doors, new seats." (It was in use for ten years after this date.) Salaries paid teachers were very low which meant continual turnover. Probably the teacher longest associated with the South Grammar was Miss Cora Church. A local girl, she graduated from Amherst high school in 1881, and began teaching at South East primary the spring of 1882, receiving $60.50 for the eleven week term. She resigned that position at the end of the fall term 1883, but a year later took over South Green primary. She began teaching at South Grammar the fall of 1887, and except for four years in North and Second Grammar schools, she remained at South Grammar until it closed in 1902. In 189__ she was paid $315.50 for teaching an average of twenty-six students in three different grades. Later, her salary reached the munificent sum of $375.

Cora Church's ability as a teacher is indicated by the comment of the superintendent of schools in his report of 1894. "South Grammar is less inert and more ambitious than the similar schools at the other end of town. It sends larger classes to high school with a much larger proportion of boys than those at the North."

Miss Church had taught in the Amherst school system for twenty-two years when she resigned in 1904. She married Samuel Crafts, bookbinder, employed by Carpenter and Morehouse — proprietors and publishers of the Amherst Record, working for the paper for many years. After her husband's death in 1923 she lived in Florida, dying in 1948. A stone marks her burial in the South Amherst cemetery, near the South Grammar school site.

South Grammar school, abandoned in 1902, was purchased by Herbert Pervier who converted it into a family dwelling. However, some years later it burned to the ground. For many years the land lay vacant until the present decade when a building was constructed on the site.



So. Amherst Brick School at Green, 1901, before later addition. (E.S. Pray)



Three of the teachers between 1902 and 1914 at new South Amherst two-room brick school, Miss Pettingill, "pretty as a picture," on a Sunday afternoon; and sisters, Grace and Helen Mixer, who taught the upper and primary grades dressed for a trip by trolley sometime around 1912-14. Over the years many of the teachers boarded at Mrs. George Hawthorne's (now the Cowles' residence) at So. East Street. Misses Fuller and Young also. (Marian Hawthorne Lyman)





About 1924, Marge and Bill Atkins wait with lunch boxes for Mr. King and the "Barge." (Atkins)

THE SANDERSON SANITARIUM ON LOWER SOUTH EAST STREET
1916-1923
By Marjorie A. Elliott
1985

Not many today realize there was at 1753 South East Street, South Amherst, a Sanderson Sanitarium, 1916-1923, featuring hydrotherapy (water treatment) for patients.



From a booklet that tells of the healthful properties of "Mountain Range Sanitarium," also called "Range View," pictured here. (Mrs. Stella S. Rainey)

(It is interesting that Mary Sanderson after her move to South Amherst, took on the faith of the Seventh Day Adventists following a proselytizing by one of her crusaders. The South Congregational Church lost three families by withdrawal. Other families with no strong church affiliation from the Nuttingville area joined the Seventh Day Adventists. The only visible differences were not in the character or Christian outlook of the Seventh Day Adventists but in the practices of their belief. They baptized new members in a pool formed by Baby Carriage Brook. They believed that Saturday was the Sabbath and that Sunday was a workday. These actions caused much discussion and disapproval in the home of the Congregationalists.

The Sanitarium was operated by Mary Sanderson, M.D. at what was earlier, Zebediah Robbins[1] property, later owned by the Edward Slabys. Today the J. Robert Smiths live at this historic home.

Dr. Mary Sanderson was born in South Amherst on September 24, 1863. She graduated from Amherst High School, then went on to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, graduated in 1893, a higher education somewhat unusual for a woman in those days. But her parents, J. Eugene and Martha (Pomeroy) Sanderson, must have recognized in their daughter an aptitude for learning and for healing the sick. She had two brothers who were already doctors, both of them practicing in California; one running a sanitarium at Berkeley.

After working in Worcester, MA; a few years following medical training, she moved on to the Nauheim Sanitarium in Springfield, Mass. attracted to the benefit of "water treatment" used there and its power of relaxing the body and mind. All who knew her declared she had a special gift and love for people that helped cure or revitalize the fatigued. "Her first thought was of humanity, not financial reward," reports a news release in 1931.

Her visit on one of her brothers in California induced his daughter, Alice Sanderson, who worked in his sanitarium to return with her to Springfield, and later help Mary establish her own sanitarium, which she named "Rangeview," on the home farm in South Amherst. Socially, she also enjoyed membership in the South Amherst Congregational Thursday Club.

Dr. Sanderson and her father, Eugene, were both new 7th Day believers. Yet, when it was known that the lower village community around them sought a site for the construction of a meeting place for regular Sunday School classes and evening services, he generously allotted a piece of his land along Mechanic Street. Later, Mary gave a deed of the property to the South East Sunday School Association, i.e., (S.E.S.S.)[2]. Here we see members of a minority faith acting magnanimously toward those of a majority.

Mary Couch, one of Peter Couch's fine daughters, assisted the nurses at Rangeview. Mary lived in the well-kept "John C. Nutting" house within sight of the sanitarium. From her we have these snapshots. They show nurses and patients in the lovely outdoor setting of the sanitarium and the dress style of the wartime period. The barn, built before 1870, is also evident.



Mary Couch, perched on a fence in springtime at Mt. Range Sanitarium, with a "fellow worker" and patient. (From Helen Couch)



Two patients rest in a swing in front of the sanitarium, nurse Zimmerman standing. Old barn and shed across road, Bay Road on left horizon. About 1919. (Helen Couch)

In the early 1920's Dr. Sanderson, feeling the lack of good transportation to Rangeview from the trolley on West Street, decided to move nearer the center of town. She found new quarters on North Prospect Street, Amherst, and moved the sanitarium and staff in 1923. There she died after a full life of service in 1930 at age 67 and was buried in the South Amherst cemetery. Miss Jane Roberts, head nurse, carried on Dr. Mary Sanderson's methods. Dr. Norman Haskell was the visiting physician. The sanitarium continued successfully for a number of years.

We don't know how long the sanitarium was run but tremendous scientific advances in medicine and medical equipment and, of course, higher taxes, were probably dominant factors in the closing of the sanitarium. A fine up-to-date Dickinson Hospital is in Northamptom but the rest home aspect of the Sanitarium is gone.

Footnotes:

1. Mr. John C. Hammond in his address on "Old Home Day" in 1921 says that Mr. Robbins never objected to the boys roaming over his hill lot back of the school house or climbing the maple trees. "The light and life of his home went out when his only child, Isaac . . . was instantly killed in door yard by the fall of the well-sweep. There was no more energy to his life. He soon died. Mrs. Robbins to whom the farm was bequeathed sold it to her brother, J. Eugene Sanderson." He was the father of Dr. Mary Sanderson.

2. Amherst College had arranged possibly since 1875 for two students to go down to the school house or homes every Sunday and lead Sunday School classes in the afternoon and hold an evening service. The new chapel, which was dedicated in 1902, also had a kitchen and suppers and social meetings were held in the chapel for years . . . (At this time the road took the name Chapel Road.) The doors were open for several weeks as a refuge to a family (the Hindles) who lost their home by a fire. Gradually it fell into disuse and the building became a kitchen addition in 1939 to the South Congregational Church at the Green. (W.H. Atkins **Leave the Light Burning.** p. 28.)



The Rodney Gray house (earlier W.W. Smith) at 1720 South East Street was made of brick in 1830. It is listed in ***Amherst: A Guide to Its Architecture****, by Paul C. Norton, and is believed to have been Porter Nutting's brick work. First owner was Elisha Bogue, Esq. The W.W. Smiths were the nearest neighbors north of the Sanitarium. (Elinor Gray)*

3. Mr. Atkins states in a newsclipping: "Many people of Amherst as well as of South Amherst will be interested in the bequests of the will of the late Miss Matilda P. Schwarz of the Florence Congregational Church, one of which was $3,000 to the Rev. John C. Wrightman, a former Hampshire County missionary. It was in about the year 1916 that Mr. Wrightman on a county tour erected a tent on the Chapel grounds of Mechanic Street, South Amherst, and conducted services for two weeks. Mr. Wrightman is now living in the Olds apartments, Daytona Beach, Florida."



This new addition to the ell of South Church (parlor, rest rooms, meeting hall and storage), was added in 1976 to the kitchen section which itself was once the chapel on Chapel Road (Mechanic Street). It was moved up South East Street in 1939. Both units add to the usefulness, convenience and beauty of the historic church. (M. Elliott)



The Peter Couch house, home of Mary Couch in the 1920's was as neat as a pin. The first story section — John Nutting's house of 1787, was the earliest dwelling in Nuttingville. Pegs, not nails fastened the beams. Couches were nearest neighbors south of the Sanitarium. (J.C.L.)

History of Brickyards in Amherst
1984
by Ruth E. Curtis

The clay deposits in East and South Amherst, especially along Hop Brook, formed the basis of an early industry. Beginning about 1818 Jonathan Bridgman made bricks on his farm and built the still-standing Bridgman Tavern at 1236 Bay Road. Then about 1830 Harvey Gilbert produced brick at what is probably the old Markert farm on West Street for an early Amherst College dormitory. From 1836 until his death in 1889, Roswell D. Howard operated a brickyard in Kelloggville, East Amherst. This was a fairly substantial operation and is recorded as having produced 700,000 bricks in 1869.

However, the only really large and long-lasting brickyard was located east of the Central Vermont Railroad tracks in South Amherst. Under the successive ownerships of C. L. Alexander, Marcy and Gardner and the Amherst Brick Company, this yard was operated from 1887 until World War II. As early as 1892 it turned out 3-4 million bricks annually and employed 35-40 men during the warm weather operating season from April to October. Many of these part time employees were area farmers, with possibly some imported seasonal laborers. A boarding house was maintained to serve noon meals. Brickyard lane, leading from 720 South East St. to the brickyard site gave easy access and is still passable and has recently been acquired by the Town of Amherst as part of the Hop Brook Conservation Area.



Three bricks from South Amherst Brickyard in Reed Birney's brick collection photographed by him. M & G = Marcy and Gardner; A.B.C. = Amherst Brick Company; brand on third brick unknown. Last owners of Amherst brickyard: Atwater and Dow, who made bricks until 1922. (Mrs. Robert Birney)



Narrow brickyard lane in 1984 entering at 720 South East Street. Broken bricks used as road base, especially in wet areas in lane leading to the site of former brickyard. W.H. Atkins noted that South Amherst was once known for its brick making industry as it was later known for its fruit culture. (Picture by Ruth Curtis)



The lane to the brickyard, one half mile farther along, which Nicholas Rak must have walked to and from work in the brickyard. (Ruth Curtis)



Stacking Bricks for Sun Drying at Lynch Brothers Brickyard, South Hadley, MA, 1948. *Pallets of bricks, six in a sand mold, sun dry for 30 days in a shed before "burning." A wheelbarrow load of bricks seems to have held about 100 bricks. Formerly, bricks weighed 6 to 6½ lbs. each. An 8¾" (and the other corresponding measurements) brick shrinks to 8"x2½"x2". Today (1980's) a brick weighs about 4 lbs. and is 8" long x 2¼" wide. The stacked bricks in the picture appear to have been nine double rows high. One estimates a wheelbarrow load of 1948 bricks to have weighed about 650 lbs. These wheelbarrows seem to be rubber-tired, of iron-braced wood. See the article on brick industry, p. 65, LTLB. (Hadley Museum, courtesy of Ruth Curtis)*

Several local men who remember working at this brickyard in school vacations around 1920 and observed it since, have described the operations. A little coal was mixed with the clay to give body and molds were washed and rinsed out with sand to permit the finished bricks to slide out. The mixture was poured in, smoothed and stamped, usually five bricks to a mold, and pallets of molds were placed on drying racks which were open but roofed to prevent cracking from drying too fast. (See picture) After partially curing, a kiln, sometimes as large as a two car garage, was constructed entirely out of the green bricks, with one or more arched entrances through which four foot logs were fed in. This wood came from Lawrence Swamp and the Pelham and Shutesbury hills and much was chestnut. The fire was tended 24 hours a day for a week and when finished, the temporary "kiln" was disassembled and turned into thousands of bricks ready for shipping. Eventually still another Amherst industry fell victim to changing times. Failure to convert to oil firing and to compete successfully with brickyards in several area towns were chiefly responsible. Nowadays, only the big companies, with full mechanization and little need for hand labor, can survive.

Footnote credit for pictures: These 1948 pictures of the drying racks and kiln are of the South Hadley brickyard and are similar to those at the Amherst Brick Company in its later years. Pictures courtesy of the South Hadley Historical Society.

AMHERST BRICKS

News Release

In 1869 the Howard yard produced 700,000 brick each year which sold for $7 to $10 a thousand.

In 1887 C.L. Alexander and Co. leased the land of W.F. Williams in South Amherst. This yard provided a shuttle system to and from both of the Amherst railroads. Bricks were manufactured on a large scale but the business became insolvent in 1892.

The next owners were Marcy and Gardner. According to Michael Britt who is ninety years of age, the brick from this yard was considered the finest made in the region.

In 1892 the yard was purchased by a Palmer firm and later by Atwater and Dow, who made bricks until 1922. There are nine brick houses in the South Amherst area all of which are dated earlier than 1850.

Stacking bricks for the Lynch Brothers' kiln. Arched openings in the base of the kilns at bottom right were fed logs constantly during the brick making season. Two men lined up behind a man with a loaded wheelbarrow. He tosses four bricks at a time to the man above who passes them on to the man above him, until the stacks of bricks have reached the correct height. (W.H. Atkins recalled seeing the great clouds of smoke that rose from the burning cords of wood in the brick kiln day by day.)



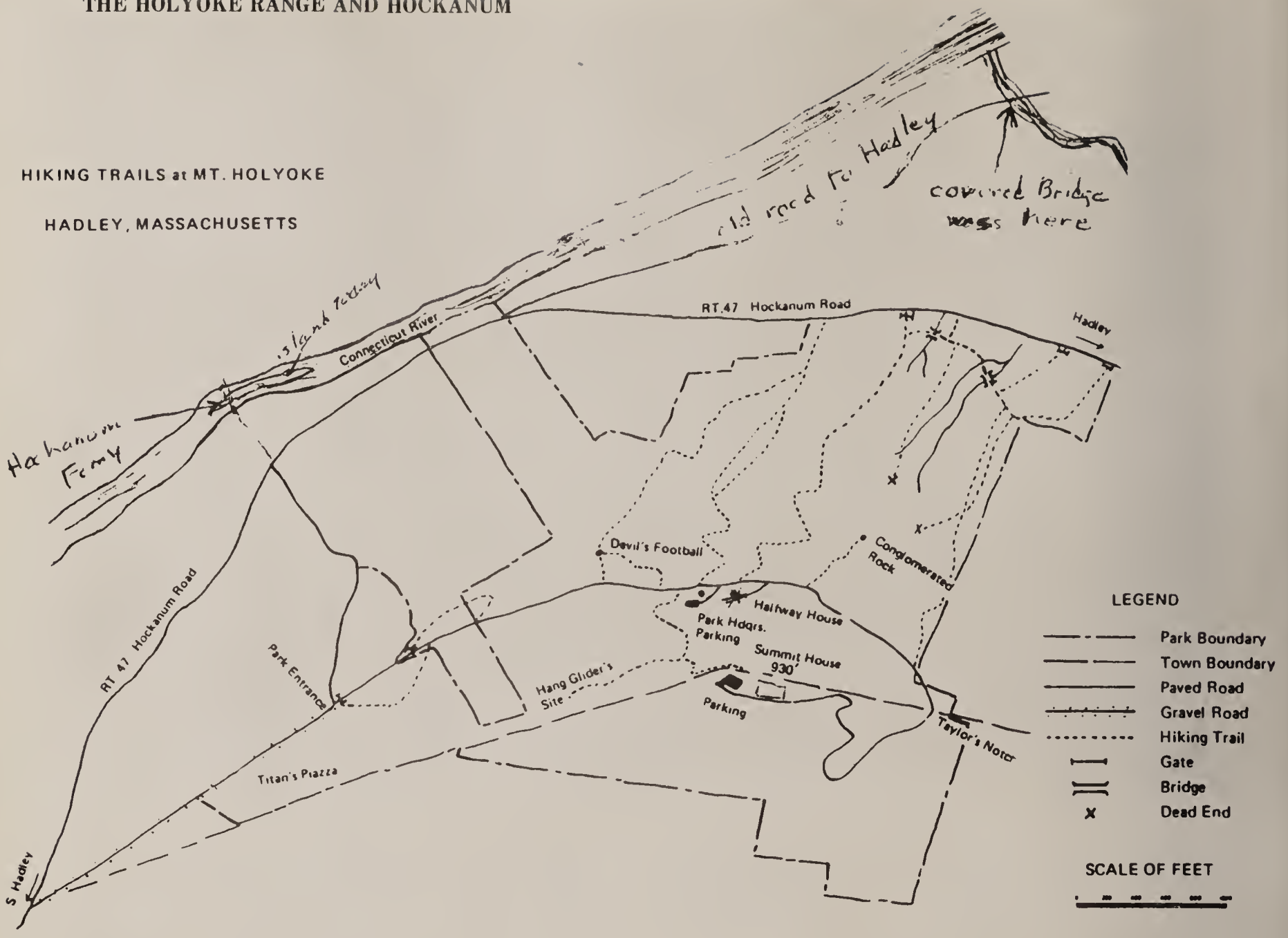
Chas' father, C.H. Thayer, flailing beans on threshing floor. (C.V. Thayer, 1920's)

AT AMHERST BRICKYARD
Letter from Chas. V. Thayer
Springfield, VT.
Aug. 30, 1984

I have no pictures of the brickyard, however, I could write if you need it, a fair description of what it looked like, and how it operated. For instance the moulded bricks (with a little bit of coal in the mix) were air/sun dried in open but roofed racks. Then they were carefully piled in a big openable building, the pile being about fifty feet wide by perhaps 150 feet long, by 25 feet high. As the pile was started, arched tunnels were built in, starting at ground level, and these tunnels ran across the pile the short (50') way, being open at both ends, with special cast iron doors fitted in at each end, so the tunnels could be opened or closed, plus I guess they had adjustable dampers in these doors. Now they went up on top of the pile, and hung individual old fired bricks on wires from the upper part of the building frame. These bricks were very carefully tied to the wires to just touch the top of the pile of unfired bricks, and which became the gages so they could tell when the new bricks were "cooked", at which point as I remember it, the bricks had shrunk as they were fired, so the gage bricks were hanging some five inches above the pile.

Now back to the tunnels — wood fires were built in them, and kept going about a week. Tremendous quantities of cordwood were pushed into the tunnel fires, which were controlled by the dampers in the tunnel doors. The wood had to be pushed 25 feet, or halfway, into the tunnels from each end. And, of course, the wood smoke from the fire went up through the opened up roof of the building, and usually at least three people would run in to our house, and tell us "that building over there is burning up". How come I know these things this well? Because when I was young and the family was even poorer than later, Dad and I would go over with the horses and wagon, and collect the ashes from the tunnels. This usually meant crawling into the tunnels to scrape the ashes out, and having to wear a handkerchief over the nose because of the horrendous dust. We used the ashes for fertilizer for fields, rich in potassium, or lye if you are making soap.

THE HOLYOKE RANGE AND HOCKANUM



Hiking trails at Mt. Holyoke, Hadley, MA., from the park leaflet; extensions drawn in by Richard Thayer in 1985. The map shows an island occluding the early ferry route across the Connecticut River; the old road to Hadley, and the site of a covered bridge, vandalized in the 1970's, that crossed the old Fort River channel.

A Park In Process

The Holyoke Range State Park is a park in the process of being created. In 1938 Joseph Allen Skinner donated the Summit House an accompanying 375 acres to the state with the understanding that it be set aside for the enjoyment of the public. Skinner State Park resulted. It wasn't long, though, before people saw a need to protect the remainder of the Range.

Presently efforts are being made to acquire public ownership of the ridgeline. Up to now about 2/3 of the proposed park has been purchased. Nearby natural features of note — such as Aldrich Lake — are also being purchased. The Halfway House on Mt. Holyoke has been restored, and restoration of the Summit House is underway. In addition, a new visitors' center has been completed on Rt. 116 in the Notch.



Chas. V. Thayer, Springfield, VT, son of Jessie Vallentine and Charles H. Thayer, kindly took views from his plane of his ancestral home in Hockanum, and of South Amherst where he grew up. (Chas. V. Thayer, 1984)



Logging the Range (Holyoke Range State Park leaflet).



Titan's Pier, renamed by Professor Edward Hitchcock, (formerly called Devil's Pier), projects from the north side of Mt. Holyoke above the old Hockanum Road to South Hadley. (Richard Thayer)



Thermopylae Pass, Hockanum, looking south, also renamed by Professor Hitchcock. In early days a narrrow passage squeezed between a twenty foot solid rock block of Mt. Holyoke and a drop-off to the river. (See illustrations p. 67-p. 80 in **Picturesque Hampshire**, *Chas. Warner, editor, Northhampton, 1890). It became a standard roadway of the 1920's. Today this is a side road to South Hadley with little traffic. (Richard Thayer)*

President Hitchcock, as he tramped over the traprock ledges of Mount Holyoke, felt the beauty of the flowers growing there and sought to change such local names as the Devil's Pier and the Devil's Piazza to classic names more in harmony with the floral growth. So the narrow defile on the Hockanum road became the Pass of Thermopylae, and the adjacent rock formation Titan's Pier and Titan's Piazza. Satan still retains his hold on the Devil's Garden, the old name for the shambles of loose rock near the Notch, but that is fast disappearing in the maw of the stone-crusher to emerge as roads and pavements.

Mary Allen's Around the Village Green, p. 38.



Titan's Piazza on Mt. Holyoke, of rare trap-rock formation, one-hundred-fifty feet up from the side road. Lobes of molten rock "froze" in these parallel spillovers of volcanic material, eons ago. [It is thought by some, since Professor Hitchcock was so charmed with variety and abundance of wild flowers on the range, that he may have confused "Titania" of Shakespeare's "Midsummer's Night Dream" with the names of savage Greek gods.] (Hampshire History, p. 242)



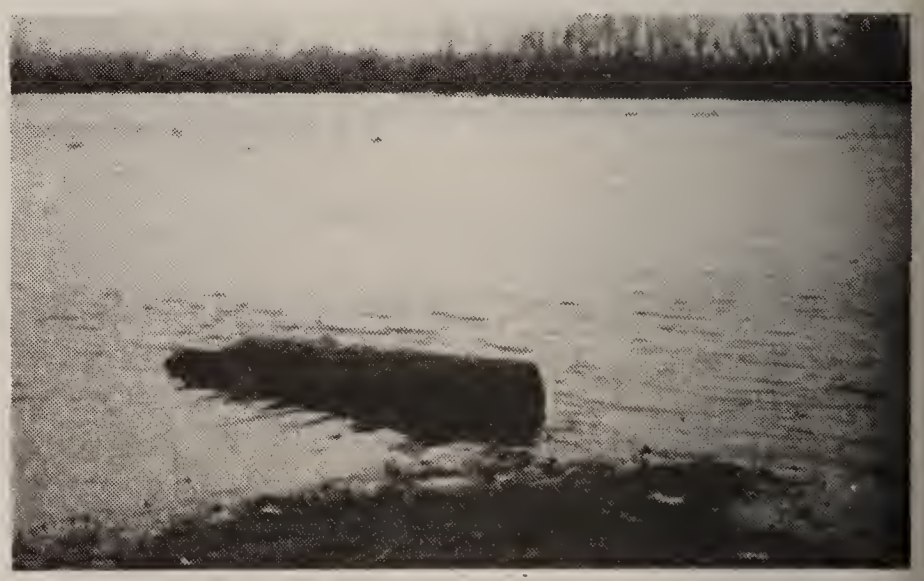
At Hockanum, a well-loaded ferry, established in 1755, crosses the Connecticut River from Hockanum to the west side. In the late 19th century fares were: 13 cents for single horse and carriage, 25 cents for a team, 5 cents per foot passenger and 3 cents a head for cattle. (Post card, 1860, Steven Puffer, Jr.)



*An aerial view of the former site of the ferry. The old route is now obstructed by an island formed by the river current. — The motive power of the ferry varied: first two blind horses trod a treadmill to pull the boat; later steam was used; finally it became a "swing ferry", the ferryman pulling on a cable suspended from bank to bank. (p. 181, **Hampshire History**, 1964)*

ITEM	
Some Indian names:	Meaning:
Netop	My friend
Connecticut	At the long estuary
Agawam	Lowland
Massachusetts	People of the Great Hill Country
Hoosac	Mountain Rock
Chicopee	Rushing Water
Saugus	Swamp
Winnipesawkee	Lake Land
Yankee	Indian for English
Nonotuck	Middle of the River

From The New England Indian, by Keith Wilbur, Globe Pequoit Press, Chester, VT, 1978.



Ferry landing site on Hockanum side. The ferry was discontinued in 1918. (Photo 1985 by Bertha Rak Parsons, Easthampton, MA.)

Hockanum

'Tis twilight, and the silent river sleeps;
Above, the evening star its vigil keeps, —
A single lamp, hung out with cheering ray
To light the traveler on his homeward way.
The gloomy hills, against the glowing sky,
Like giants march in slow procession by;
And in the shining mirror, clear and cold,
Their bending forms the trees and shrubs behold.
Silence and beauty reign. The night bird's call
Is hushed. A soft enchantment over all,
Spirit and scene alike, is gently thrown;
And as the noiseless ferry boat alone
Its steady way pursues across the stream,
We gaze as one awakening from a dream,
And quickly out of sight with jealous care,
In memory's depths, we hide the picture rare, —
A gem enshrined, a bit of Nature's heart —
The master Artist's masterpiece of Art.

— Alice M. Walker

IN THE CORNFIELD

Jessie Vallentine Thayer

Pleasant it has been to lie here
In this valley gently sloping
From the mountain to the river.

Three score springs and more have vanished
Since your grandsire's straining Devons
Clove the good loam where my brother
Slumbers, yonder 'neath your fruit trees.

When the skull rolled out beside him,
Straightway then he checked his oxen.
Long he gazed upon the mountain,
On the meadow, on the river,
And he looked down with compassion,
Leaning there upon his plow-beam.
Then, decided, left his labor,
Strode along the fertile furrow,
To the farmstead bent his footsteps.
Soon with gleaming spade returning,
Wrought a deep grave in his cornfield
While his great-eyed, patient oxen
Rested in unwonted leisure.

When the task was done, your grandsire
Made excuses to his oxen
For the interrupted labor.
" He was of the Early People.
In this field their maize was growing
Long before the white man's coming.
It is right that he should lie here."

His son's furrows found my camp-fire.
Scattered was the shining charcoal
And the deer bones, split for marrow,
Crushed to powder 'neath his coulter.

Then I knew the time was coming
When the frost-heave of the winter
And the deep bite of your plowshare
Would conspire to break my slumber.
Long I lay here unmolested
While above me stood the mountain
In its still and changeless beauty,
While the restless, wayward river
Swept beyond the mountain gateway
In its ever changing beauty.

In the sheltered cove below me,
Every spring the great blue heron
Stands and ponders 'mid the sedges.
Every spring the wild goose leader,
Like the barbed point of a spearhead,
Is the first to cleave its waters.



Aerial view of the old Richard Thayer homestead in Hockanum set behind a low hill safely back from floods of the Connecticut River; high bank in the foreground. (C. V. Thayer)

Here the ranks of corn in legions,
Like a mighty host with banners,
Marched with shining plumèd lances
O'er my head a hundred summers,
For as many golden autumns,
Camped within their russet lodges.

Pleasant it has been to lie here
In this valley, gently sloping
From the mountain to the river.
Hear me then, while I petition:
Lay me back beneath the furrow.
Let me hear the corn leaves rustle
For another hundred summers.
Let the blessing of my spirit
Rest upon this field forever.



Richard Thayer on his property in Hockanum, in front of famous "Indian Meadows," holding the subject of the poem, and subsequently carefully preserved. (Photo, 1985, by Mrs. Richard Thayer)



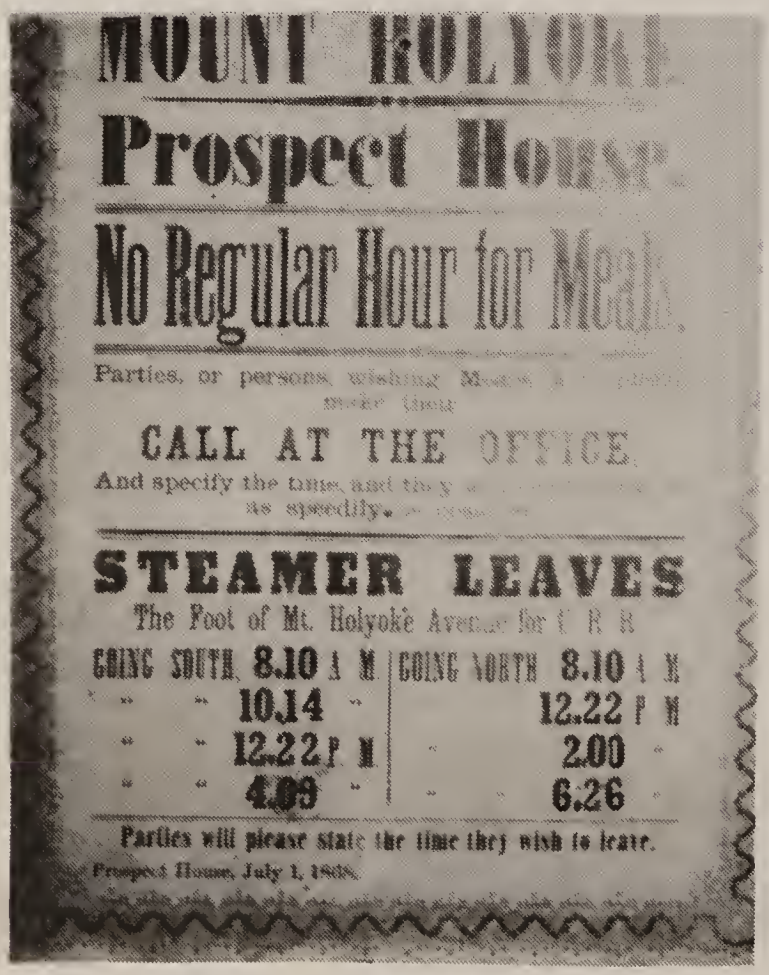
Skeleton buried in an Indian "honor funeral", according to Smith College study at the corn-field of the Richard Thayer farm, 179 Hockanum St., Hadley, MA. Found and photographed in 1922. (Richard Thayer, 1985)



This is how Mt. Holyoke and tramway looked in 1935 from the Halfway House level. (From the Park booklet)

I must not fail to speak of the joys of Mount Holyoke. A span of horses, in themselves an excitement, drew us and our guests to the Half Way House. From there we had our choice of walking up the road encircling the mountain to the summit, or of being pulled up the incline of the wooden "funicular," or even of climbing the 522 steps of the long stairway that paralleled the track. The floor of the old Prospect House, at the top, was smooth for dancing, and between dances we might have the rare privilege of taking the Claude Lorraine glass from its locked security and looking into it to see the meadows' patchwork of colors, below, like a pattern in a real kaleidoscope — evenly cut fields of wheat, rye, and barley, and farmhouses, and the river winding to the Ox-Bow, the ferry to Hockanum and the covered bridge over the Fort River, where the handsomest bitter-sweet grew. There, too, were Shepard's Island and Clay Island, which we had visited to hunt for claystones. Or in another mood we might hunt through the hotel registers for autographs. Jenny Lind wrote her name in 1852, after riding on horseback up the trail to the summit. Abraham Lincoln left his signature when he visited the region at the time of his Cooper Union speech. There were the autographs of Charles Sumner and Henry W. Longfellow and John Quincy Adams. Finally we bought lemonade at ten cents a glass and drank it through a straw, realizing then for the first time that cider was not the only drink to be consumed in this way.

Mary Allen's **Around the Village Green, 1939**


MOUNT HOLYOKE.

Prospect House.

No Regular Hour for Meals.

Parties, or persons wishing Meals at other times, will please make their wants known

CALL AT THE OFFICE.

And specify the time, and they will be served as speedily as possible.

STEAMER LEAVES

The Foot of Mt. Holyoke Avenue for C. R. R.

GOING SOUTH		GOING NORTH	
8.10	A. M.	8.10	A. M.
10.14	"	12.22	P. M.
12.22	P. M.	2.00	"
4.09	"	6.26	"

Parties will please state the time they wish to leave.

Prospect House, July 1, 1868.

Printed sign at Prospect House, Mt. Holyoke. Connections 1808 were made with a steamer on the Connecticut River at the foot of the mountain.

ANCIENT MOUNTAINS

The Hampshire Drumlin, Amherst, Mass.
Feb. 5, 1981
By Norman Myrick

Venerable to the point of being one of the oldest mountain groups in North America, the Holyoke Range, that serves as a dramatic backdrop to Hampshire Village, shares its role of geological elder only with the Laurentians in Quebec.

The mountains in the "Range" have some illustrious names. Beginning from the river at the western end, the first of the worn and rounded humps that boil up from the Valley is Mt. Holyoke, named after one of the early pioneers in the Valley, Elizur Holyoke.

East of Mt. Holyoke are a series of small bumps that can hardly be called separate peaks. These are known as the Seven Sisters and can be easily seen from Route 9.

The Sisters are succeeded by two fairly large hills that qualify as mountains if Mt. Holyoke is taken as a standard. The two are called Big Tinker and Little Tinker. Big Tinker is the first hill on the right as one looks westward from Hampshire Village. Little Tinker is behind it and not visible from the Village.

The Range climbs higher as it goes eastward. Beyond Big Tinker is Mt. Hitchcock, named for the third president of Amherst College, a famed geologist as well as "prexy." His book on geology has gone through twenty-one editions, according to Prof. George Bain, another of Amherst's noted geologists.

Doing Mt. Hitchcock one better is the last of the high tors before the "Range" plunges sharply down to form the famous "Notch." This last rampart, directly behind Hampshire Village, is Big Bear. It is steep, rocky and garnished with some healthy cliffs that can be seen from your deck.

At the foot of Big Bear is the stone crusher. There used to be a good sized chocolate drop of a hill that erupted upward as abruptly as Big Bear drove downward. This was Little Bear. The pass between Big Bear and Little Bear was "The Notch." Unfortunately the quarry has gnawed steadily away at Little Bear so that the Notch has become far less obvious. But it was there for all of three hundred million years.



Stone crusher at the Notch, Mt. Holyoke Range, which continued to chew away until it removed Little Bear. (Scott post card, 1908)

Up from the bottom of Little Bear the patriarch of the Range, grand old Norwottuck, climbs slowly to the east. It ends in the peak that dominates the Range from the river to the Pelham Hills. The mountain gets its name from the Indian term for the present Hadley-Amherst area.

Farthest to the east is a flat top mountain of the type that invariably has the name of Breadloaf or Table or Long wherever it happens to be found. This one is known as Long Mountain.

There is a trail that runs along the top of the Range. One can find a beginning for the Big Bear-Mt. Holyoke section westward just opposite the stone crusher. It's steep and you have to work tc get to the top but it gets you there in a hurry. Another trail runs over Norwottuck. You ought to hike them both. You can see to the end of the world from the peaks either way.



Mt. Norwottuck through Howard Atkins' peach orchard in South Amherst. (Everett Dimock, 1985)

Lost On The Mountain

South Amherst parents will never forget a fall night in the 1960's when a troop of young Girl Scouts got lost on Mt. Norwottuck. They had left with their leaders to climb the mountain and would be back for supper. Darkness came on. Mothers below looked out the window; listened. Telephones rang. Dads were summoned. The words reechoed: "Girl Scouts lost on the mountain."

Bill Atkins' daughter Linda was in that troop. "All the community turned out to help," says Bill. "Lined up on Bay Road." Police joined them. Plans were made. Flashlights. Distances to keep. Signals. A siren would blow when the girls were found. It was not easy to climb straight up in the night. Stumble, holler, listen; brush in your face, concern in your heart. Reached the top - no luck. "One thing was certain," says Bill. "We had combed that side of the mountain and the girls were not there."

Chauncey Simmons ran a gas station on West Street; heard the news, closed up, and knowing the mountain terrain better than most, drove to the Granby side. He crossed a farm to a trail by Cranberry Pond and there they were! Again the telephones rang. Police sirens blew and blew. Lights were on past midnight as the story was told and retold. Ask some woman who was a So. Amherst Girl Scout in the 1960's to tell you about it. She will! (M. Elliott)

AN IRRETRIEVABLE LOSS - LITTLE BEAR



A watercolor of the Range painted on request in 1944, by Eleanor M. Wolters, from the S.W. side of the Atkins hill orchard. In immediate foreground is the Robert Mannheim place, 374 Middle St. (Jim Schoonmaker's in 1940's). The dwelling and barn of Wes Wentworth's (formerly Pearl E. Thayer's) are indicated at west corner of Middle and Bay Rd. Ted Critchett's orchards are painted in bloom, along Bay Road at foot of Range. We see the primordial silhouette of the Range before the quarry destroyed Little Bear. The Wolters family lived two houses north of W.H. Atkins in early 1940's)



A 1984 view of the Range seen from the dooryard of Robert Stiles, West St. Little Bear has been devoured by the stonecrusher. Small building at the left was a fruit stand, then gas station, next a real estate office across West St. Hampshire College bought Stiles' property and moved this building into the dooryard, converting it into an admissions office. [Mt. Norwottuck (left background) was known by Amherst's colonial settlers of 1750 as "Hilyard's Knob" — some maps so designate it. Professor Alfred Goodale (house now Ricci's) told Phil Ives, "Hilyard's Knob" was commonly contracted to "Hi's Knob" until Prof. Edward Hitchcock, nineteenth century geologist, changed its name to Norwottuck which means "meadow in the bend of the river" designating Hadley.] (M. Elliott)



A photo at Prospect House atop Mt. Holyoke records a hike by a So. Congo. Church Sunday School class of young women, and styles of dress in 1916. At left: (1) Gertrude McKemmie; (2) seated to her left, Mrs. Earl Howlett, S.S. teacher; (3) Marian Lyman, seated in front in middy blouse and tie, with walking stick; (4) seated behind, blond Dorothy Howlett; (5) in front of Dorothy Howlett, Dorothy Turner, also in middy and tie; (6) in hat with cane, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Milk, S.S. teacher (Middle St.); (7) Marie Gail Goodrich, with forehead band, standing at rear; (8) Lila Tiffany, also with forehead band at Marie's left; (9) blond Vera Smith in buttoned sweater; (10) Dorothy Marsh, in middy also, at extreme right. (Courtesy Dorothy Marsh Koeber)

Note: Mrs. Milk was the mother of Mrs. Hubert Barton; Dorothy Marsh lived next door south of Win Shumway. Her father Edward Marsh was the lamplighter of South Amherst. See Article on Lamplighter, p.35. Lila Tiffany was later chauffeur for canner Charles Miller, see p.39.



Photo of the "Seven Sisters" of the Range from Hadley on a winter evening. Unknown photographer. See also the April 1946 Letter to Servicemen for view of a greater sweep of the Range.

DEATH of MRS. ALICE G. MORELL RECALLS TRAGEDY

Amherst Record
July 1, 1942

The death of Mrs. Alice Goodrich Morell in Palo Alto, Calif., a notice of which appeared in last week's *Record*, recalls to many of the older Amherst residents the tragedy which occurred in her family 43 years ago this month, when her 17-year-old daughter, Edith, was murdered by a rejected Indian employee on the farm. The tragedy occurred on July 31, 1899 and after killing the young girl, the Indian, who claimed to be the son of a Comanche chieftain, burned all the buildings and committed suicide by jumping into the fire.

The Morells had purchased in 1882 of Oren Williams a farm at South Amherst which was located just north of the Congregational Church. The Munson Memorial Library is now located on a portion of the farm. John F. Morell died suddenly of pneumonia on February 11, 1897 and Mrs. Morell was operating the farm. At that time a dozen or more young men had come from Indian schools to work on South Amherst farms. Eugene V. Takahpuer was one of these young men and had been a faithful worker on the Morell farm for about a year. During the winter and spring he had become enamored of Edith, who was to have entered the senior class at Amherst High School that fall.

When his attentions were spurned the Indian's jealousy was aroused and he decided upon revenge.

On the morning of the tragedy Mrs. Morell had paid off the young hot-headed Comanche and told him his services no longer would be required. Sullen and silent he sneaked away vowing vengeance. Early that afternoon Takahpuer rode his bicycle 2½ miles to Amherst center where he bought at the Holland & Gallond Hardware store a .22 caliber Iver Johnson revolver. Returning to South Amherst by way of East Street he stopped near the New London Northern railroad bridge and fired several shots apparently testing it out. To a passing farmer he remarked he was "shooting woodchucks." Passing Deacon Henry C. Dickinson, a neighbor of the Morells, he bade him goodbye and remarked that he might not see him again. Mr. Dickinson's question "Where are you going?" he replied not very far. Within 20 minutes flames were bursting from the barns.

Arriving at the Morell house Takahpuer sought Edith Morell, whom he found in front of a refrigerator in the cellar of an ell. There were no witnesses to their brief conversation, but Mrs. Morell, who was in the kitchen getting supper, heard two shots fired. Placing the revolver in his pocket the Indian ran upstairs and told Mrs. Morell that he had shot and killed her daughter and he was going to fire the buildings. He rushed out and was last seen by Mrs. Morell hastening toward the barn, from which in a few minutes the flames burst forth.

Mrs. Morell found Edith unconscious on the cellar floor and she was taken across the Common to the home of T.M. Armstrong where she died before the arrival of a physician from Amherst. The fire swept with extraordinary rapidity through the barns; and 40 tons of hay, 12 cows, two horses, young stock and valuable farm machinery were destroyed. The Amherst fire department and bucket brigades from nearby homes surrounding the Common could not stop the spread of the flames, although most of the furniture was saved.

The next morning when the ruins had cooled off sufficiently for an investigation a part of a skull, teeth, ribs and a thigh bone were discovered in a tangle of farm wagon tires in about the center of what was the barn floor. Dr. H.B. Perry, medical examiner, declared they were human bones. One hand apparently was clutching a revolver, which Holland and Gallond identified as the weapon the Indian had bought the day before at their store. Three cartridges had been fired. It was Dr. Perry's theory that the Indian had climbed aboard the wagon and had made his brain a target for one bullet before the devouring flames engulfed him. The official verdict was murder and suicide. It was 6 p.m. when Edith was shot and the news of the tragedy quickly spread far and wide. One of the first on the scene was State Detective McKay of Northampton, who took charge of the investigation. Hundreds visited the scene of the greatest tragedy in the history of South Amherst. They came afoot, by horse and buggy and bicycle and those who had talked lynching the night before calmed down with the discovery of human bones in the ruins.

The police learned that Takahpuer had attended the Indian school at Carlisle, Pa. This institution had been founded in 1879 during the administration of President Rutherford B. Hayes by Capt. Pratt, a United States army officer, who utilized some old Civil War barracks. The school was discontinued during the World War. Takahpuer had first been employed on several Conway farms after his arrival in the Connecticut valley. The officers learned that he had attended the Conway high school and the Congregational church. They said he had hoped sometime to own a farm of his own. He was proud of his Indian ancestry from many "Heap Big Chiefs" and was so conceited he was unpopular with the other Indian boys at South Amherst that summer. After the pitiful tragedy at the Morell farm the employment of Indian boys faded out of the picture.

A private funeral service was held for Edith Morell at the home of John E. Read just south of the church and burial was in the Churchyard-on-the-Hill at Lenox, where her father had been buried only two years before. Burial of Mrs. Morell also will be in the same lot, in which five generations of the Morell family are represented.



Edith Morell, daughter of John and Alice Goodrich Morell, jauntily poses on some stones in a brook. (Amherst Record, from Jones Library)

Letters to William H. Atkins from George Morell
Palo Alto, California July 9, 1950

Dear Will,

Just back from a trip to northeastern Arizona and southeastern Utah in search of a high, dry and hot spot for the benefit of sinus trouble and a bit of rheumatism. I found the hot weather on the Mohave desert here in California and cold weather on the Arizona-Utah plateau, 5,000 feet up, where it was also supposed to be hot. But a later summer produced wintery weather with icy blasts blowing down from the snowy peaks. I thought of you especially on the Mohave desert wondering if the heat and the dryness would bring you the relief it gives me from some of the aches. . . .

Patsy arrived home a few days after I did. She flew from Chicago, where she has been working for a year, in the arts department of the University of Chicago to Greely, Colorado. There she joined a girlfriend, a classmate at Colorado University, and together they drove in the other girl's car to Palo Alto. Patsy looks very well and is happily planning for her wedding on September second. . . .

Athene has been exceptionally well and is happy and busy with wedding plans. The wedding will take place in the Stanford Memorial Church.

Jack (22 years old) finished his graduate studies at the San Jose State College school of business on the 24th and a week later had a job with United Air Lines, in the selling end, just what he wanted. . . .

George (15 years old) is at present on a pack trip, camping and fishing with his chum, Nicky, under the wing of Nicky's dad. They are somewhere above Yosemite Valley and I expect to get George from the Valley later this week.

I recall that when I was his age I was proudly earning a man's wages of those days, 15 cents an hour, ten hours a day at haying in South Amherst.

The census figures for this area just released show an increase of over 100% in population since 1940. You can imagine the problems that this rapid growth makes especially in the matter of schools. Certain areas have increased over 300% during the ten year period and most of the new people are children. As a result schools, and fortunately, churches, are mushrooming everywhere. Naturally our newspapers share in this growth, which keeps us busy buying new machinery to turn out some papers. . . .

We enjoyed your newsy May letter very much. I can appreciate Howard's difficulty in finding the right man to manage his enterprises. I have had the same experience. The trouble is that the kind of man we want is able to build up and manage his own enterprise.

How comforting it must be to you to have your daughter so well settled close by, in the next state, only a few miles away; and your sons right under your own wing doing so well. Too bad the apple crop turned out so poorly from a financial standpoint. I know how that hurts recalling three years of my early newspaper struggles when I lost $12,000 per year. I was broke but fortunately, the banks didn't know it and saw me through. They did not lose by doing so.

We pumped all water for our stock in South Amherst with a wooden pump at the barn well. I remember the winter my father died, 1897, that we had 35 head of stock in the barn, including three horses and four calves. It amazed me, the amount of water they could drink, and it was my job to pump it all. I was ten then and developed a powerful lot of muscle working that pump. Can recall that I pumped 100 strokes then stopped for breath. Wonder if I could do it now.

I'm writing the editor of the Journal complimenting you on your news reports and articles. I was especially glad to learn that there really was a Logtown which subsequently became Dwight's Station.

No, I never saw a gash saw working but I can tell you something about the business end of a crosscut saw and about hewing chestnut ties with a broadaxe having served time with both. . . .

Sunday, *November 5, 1950*

. . . Your story of the burning of the depot on July 1, 1985 with its big supply of stored fireworks brought back many memories. I was one of the first to arrive (by bicycle) to find agent Bourne running around in circles and wringing his hands as skyrockets, roman candles and giant firecrackers fizzed and exploded behind him. I'm glad you found out about Logtown, too, (Leave the Light Burning, p. 20). I'll always prefer the name, Logtown Road to Depot Road. And since there is neither depot nor town, one is as appropriate as the other and I'm sure you will agree that Logtown is the more picturesque of the two in addition to being the original name.

. . .

Your newsy items about old friends and things in South Amherst both in your letters and in the Journal are much appreciated and enjoyed by me. The article on the grist mill at Mill Valley I like especially. I recall going with my father when he drew a load of corn to be cracked or ground there. And I was fascinated as a youngster watching Herb Dwight's Uncle Ashabel bore holes in lengths of pine log to be made into wooden pumps. This was in his shop which lay between the gristmill and the saw mill at Mill Valley.

Sincerely, George



Reunion in manhood of George Morell, from California with Herb Dwight, boyhood friends, at Dwight's front door. Morell (1886-1978) became president of Peninsula Newspapers and trustee of Stanford University. Gave 694 acres, top of Black Mountain, to his Alma Mater. (Boltwood Collection, Jones Library)



Seven daughters of George and Judith Nutting, born and married in the same front room of the George Nutting house of 1810, are pictured above at 1680 So. East St. l. to r.: Julia, Judith, Mary Maria, Hannah, Harriet, Amelia; the mother, Judith Hastings Nutting, center front. George (1786-1838 the only son of Truman Nutting by first wife, Esther) was elected selectman of Amherst, and he is credited with the construction in 1824-25 of the So. Congregational Church at age 38.



The George Nutting house changed in owners and appearance. It belonged at the turn of this century to Frank Freeman, South Amherst's only black man, who was probably "overlooked" by the community. He had a wife and child, and worked at the Sanderson Sanitarium which was in operation 1916-1923. Possibly widowed by 1923, he left his home and moved into the Slaby house (the previous Sanitarium) and worked for Joe Kershlis. In 1925 the Nutting house was in poor condition (p. 28, Book I). Brainard Lyman bought it, moved it further back and sold it to Archie Saunders who repaired it. Purchased in the mid-sixties by Brayton Wilson, who remodeled it as shown in picture on page 109 of this book, taken in 1984, M. Elliott.



*The "New Road" of 1850 ran between South East Street and Bay Road where its name changed to Mechanic St. from Bay Road up the foot of the mountain. The north part of the road came to be known as "Chapel Road" after a small chapel built at the east side of New Road about 1901 to provide a place for Sunday meetings. The chapel was given to the South Congregational Church in 1939. The entire street is now called Mechanic Street. (**John Nutting of South Amherst** by Walter Nutting)*



Old Nuttingville crossroads: Mechanic St. intersecting Bay Rd., looking to the northeast. The late George Hayward's house in the northwest corner stands on the site of Truman Nutting's home. On the southeast corner was his brother, Levi Nutting's house, of the 1840's, now being repaired by the Robert Garabrandts. The earlier large house of Truman (second son of John) built about 1827, was moved from its site to Mechanic St. The Truman family had left in 1852 migrating west to Minnesota. In the 1920's W.H. Atkins moved half the T. Nutting house to two doors from his place; in 1941 the Sherwin Kings added on to the remaining half left on Mechanic St. The second house east from the crossroad on Bay Road was Ebenezer Nutting's, brother of Levi and Truman. The third (off the map) was Edward C. Bolter's (son of Ziba); 737 Bay Rd., owned today by Stephen Coelen. (A Mr. Losey had bought the house when Leon was a boy, which explains Leon's referral in his letter to the house as "Losie's"). Farther east, on No. side of Bay Rd. was a Methodist church, built and used 1849-1875. For a while after that many met Sundays at school house, then at homes, until chapel (south side Mechanic St.) was built. All other houses facing the camera are recently built except for Daniel Krause's at 734 Bay Rd. (See map, page 110.) (At one time Horace C. and Annie (daughter of Edwin A. Bolter) lived either here or at 737; their son Raymond Grosvenor was killed in an accident. Some house swopping in family!) Aerial by C.V. Thayer.



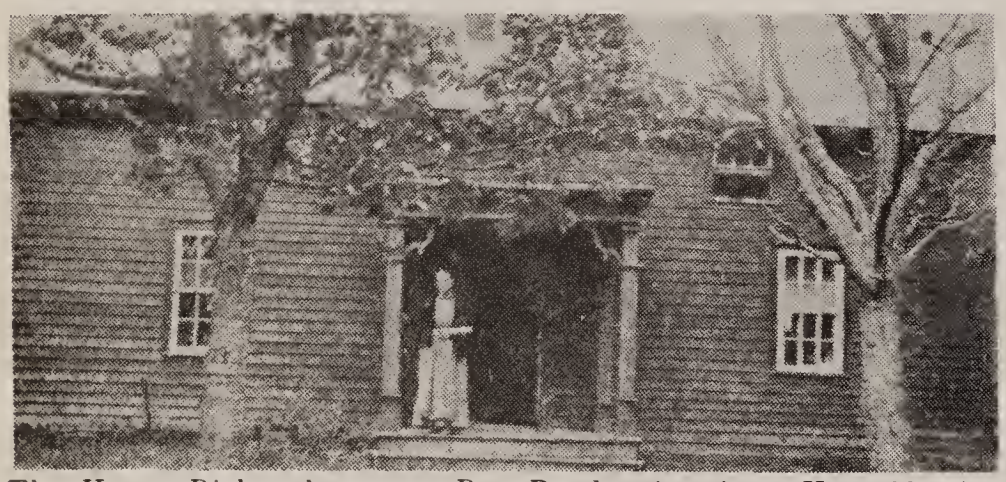
Close-up of Truman Nutting's first house, 1949 photo, distinguishable as part of 143 Mechanic, Sherwin King house of today. (Janine King Goodhind, their daughter)



Janine King Goodhind, a seventh generation descendant of George Nutting, is standing beside the post and beam construction, (revealed when Mr. King removed the plaster to please Janine), of the house of Truman Nutting; now located on Mechanic St. (Elliott, 1985)



The Ebenezer Nutting house in which Leon Bolter was born and lived. See article. Ebenezer was brother of Levi who lived next door west at Bay Road. This house was built in early 1830's. Around 1852 Leon, like his father and uncle, moved on to Minnesota and the house later became a spring and fall outing resort for seniors of Mt. Holyoke College. According to Phil Ives some of the college girls spent a day or weekend, getting off the trolley at Ives' house and waiting inside in cold weather for a team to take them to their retreat center. "My mother befriended the girls, especially missionary daughters. Some of the girls gave programs at meetings of the Ladies' Benevolent Society of So. Congregational Church, after its monthly suppers." The corner house on Middle Street and at 454 Bay Road is also said to have been a tea house in 1920's for students. (Wallace Nutting, John Nutting)



*The Henry Bishop house on Bay Road, with Aunt Kate Nutting Bishop, youngest daughter of progenitor John Nutting (1762-1834). Her daughter Emily Bishop Thayer was born in house of John Nutting, because her parents had gone to keep house for blind grandmother Catherine Nutting, widow of John. The Bishop house, remodeled, became the home of Paul and Mary (Thayer) Wheelock, (pictured p. 89, **Leave the Light Burning**). Scores of So. Amherst citizens are descendants of Geo. Nutting, (only son of John and his first wife, Esther), who had seven daughters and two sons, or of John and his second wife Catherine who had eleven children, seven of them sons. Yet, by the mid-1860's there were none in So. Amherst who could perpetuate the Nutting name. (Walter Nutting's **John Nutting of South Amherst, 1925**)*

"The brick schoolhouse, circa 1825, that stood at the corner of South East and Bay Road, was converted into a dwelling about 1870 by Dwight Dickinson, and owned by the Alfieri family in the early 20th century. It caught fire, along with the Methodist church beside it, long since, "down converted" into a barn and burned, 1929. I once visited Vera Alfieri, a schoolmate, and she had taken me out into the barn that she said had once been a church. I remember my shock at seeing piles of hay mounded up against the windows, above the area where pews had once been in place. I did not know that such a thing could happen to churches. Even today, when I see a church "remodeled" for secular use I experience a twinge. So much dedication, grief, joy, community, is experienced in a church by its builders and members!" (Elliott)

LETTER TO W.H. ATKINS FROM LEON M. BOLTER

(Leon M. Bolter, 1874-195__, son of Edward (C or G.) and Hattie Nutting Bolter, grandson of Ziba and Christina P. Bolter, 1611 South East Street circa 1920's. Jacob Mosakawicz house recently restored by the Robert Sweeneys. W.H. Atkins, 1871-1952, son of George and Charlotte Atkins, moved to So. Amherst via Westfield from Granville, in 1887)

Mr. Will H. Atkins
Amherst, MA *Spring 1950*
Dear Mr. Atkins,

My sister, Lillian Wales(1) (Mrs. Clinton Wales) of Nuttingville on the Bay Road sent me a clipping from the **Amherst Journal** of February 10, 1950. The article was written by you and was headed, "Brick School House Destroyed by Fire." The clipping just arrived today and has with it a map of Nuttingville (p. 25 in **Leave the Light Burning**) where I was born of Eddie and Hatter (Harriet) Nutting Bolter.—

You remember me? I remember you well and can recall when you as a boy and your parents bought the farm in Amherst about half-way from our farm and the "Green." You and your father started resuscitating the old apple orchard by pruning and spraying. We old-fashioned farmers all thought you were visionary and would fail but did you show us all how behind the times we were(2)!

I doubt that you can appreciate the thrill your article has given me; the places appearing on the map and my ancestors' names.

Some thirty-five years ago, while living in Minneapolis, Minnesota, I joined the Sons of the American Revolution after proving from the records in Washington that John Nutting was my ancestor. Kate Bishop, my mother's aunt (their house showing on the map as Henry Bishop) was, as you know, the last surviving daughter of a revolutionary soldier, John Nutting. Kate (Catharine) Bishop, my great-aunt was well and healthy when I was a man, grown and left South Amherst to take the position in the Primer Sheldon & Co. Bank in Cloquet, Minnesota in 1894. She was the grandmother of Chas. and Pearl, Mary, and Carrie Thayer, all of whom are still living at or near the old Bishop place. In fact, I hear from them often and Mary (Thayer) Wheelock(3) is living now in the old Bishop house.

Dwight Dickinson[4] married Etta Bolter, my aunt, and of course Wally Dick (Dickinson) was my cousin. I was with his brother, Lester, the day he drowned while they were visiting us.

The house in which I was born and lived until the age of nine must be the one on the map marked Ebenezer Nutting. There were two houses in that little stretch, one ours and just to the west. Bosie's house.[5] The house across the Bay Road shown as Wyman Hoyt's (whom I remember well) was occupied when I was a child by a family named Robinson who owned the shop shown as Ebenezer Nutting's shop. The little mill pond Bay Road back of it is where I learned to swim as a boy of eight. I well remember the day when I was trying to fool the other boys and make them think I could swim and fooled myself by really swimming. I remember Aunt "Em" Nutting, the school teacher (1852-1853) mentioned in the article. When I was a boy she was a little seamstress on East Street in Amherst and with her lived Truman Nutting (a descendant), a boy somewhat older than myself. Don't think you can realize how I long to go back to that exact spot. It would be heaven just to browse around those old places. I am 77 next March . You must be nearly 80. . . .

I spent 30 years in Minnesota organizing and operating country banks. Sold out in 1923 at which time I was president and in stock control of six First National Banks — three in Minnesota and three in Montana. A short record of my interests can be found in the archives of the State Historical Society, St. Paul . . . Hope this letter isn't tiresome to you but I think it fine of you to write an article involving so many of my ancestors and recalling for me so much of my far-away youth. . . .

—Leon M. Bolter

Footnotes by the editor:

1. Lottie, Lillian and Harrison were siblings.

2. Salem Hammond was previous owner of Atkins Farm and left a 100 apple tree orchard, north of the house. George and William H. Atkins added 30 Mac in 1888 which were an impetus to the "apple fever" of 1900-1920 in So. Amherst.

3. Mary Wheelock recently celebrated 100th birthday.

4. Dwight Dickinson bought and moved the Methodist Church next to the little brick school, South East Street.

5. "Bosie" is Mr. Losey.



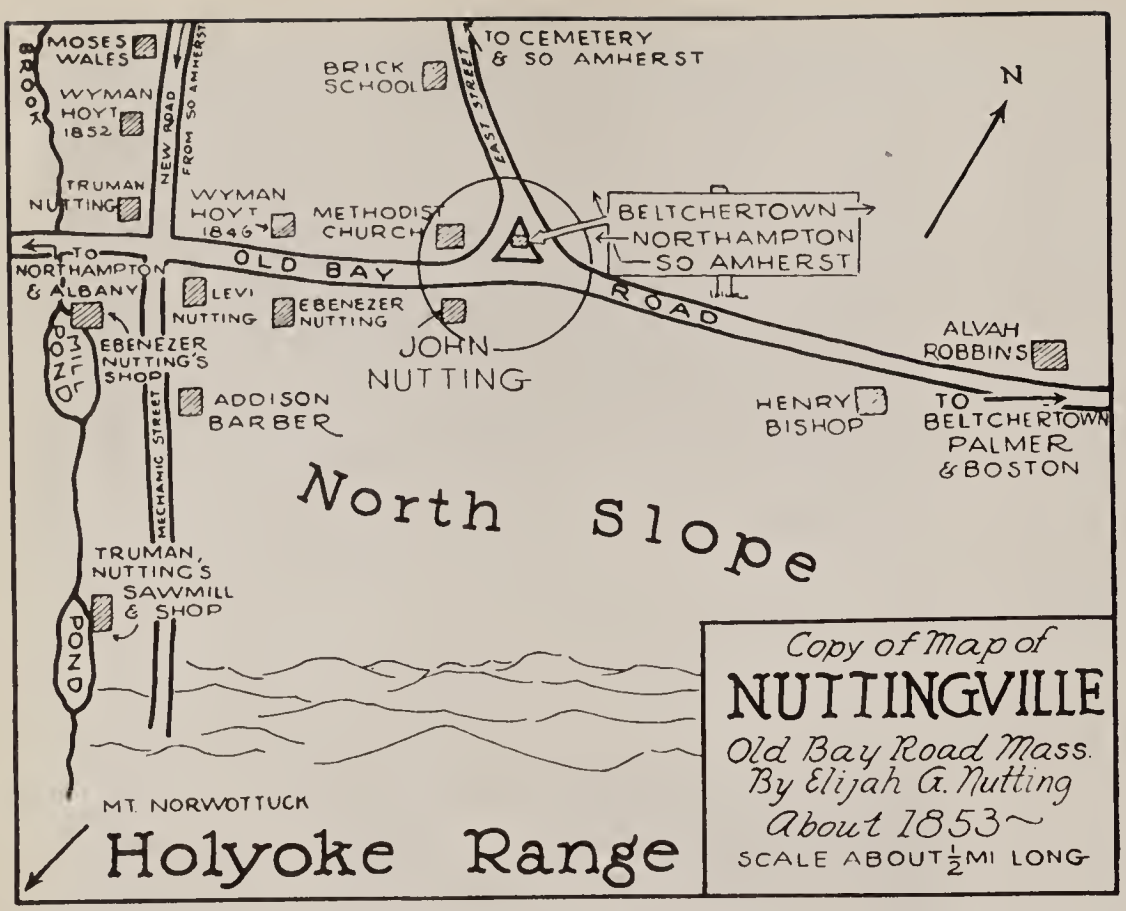
*Levi Nutting's house is located on the south-east corner of the Mechanic St.-Bay Road intersection, west of his brother Ebenezer's. Built in the early 1840's, this house at the corner of Mechanic St. was in good shape through the 1920's then fell into disrepair. (W. Nutting, **John Nutting of South Amherst.**)*



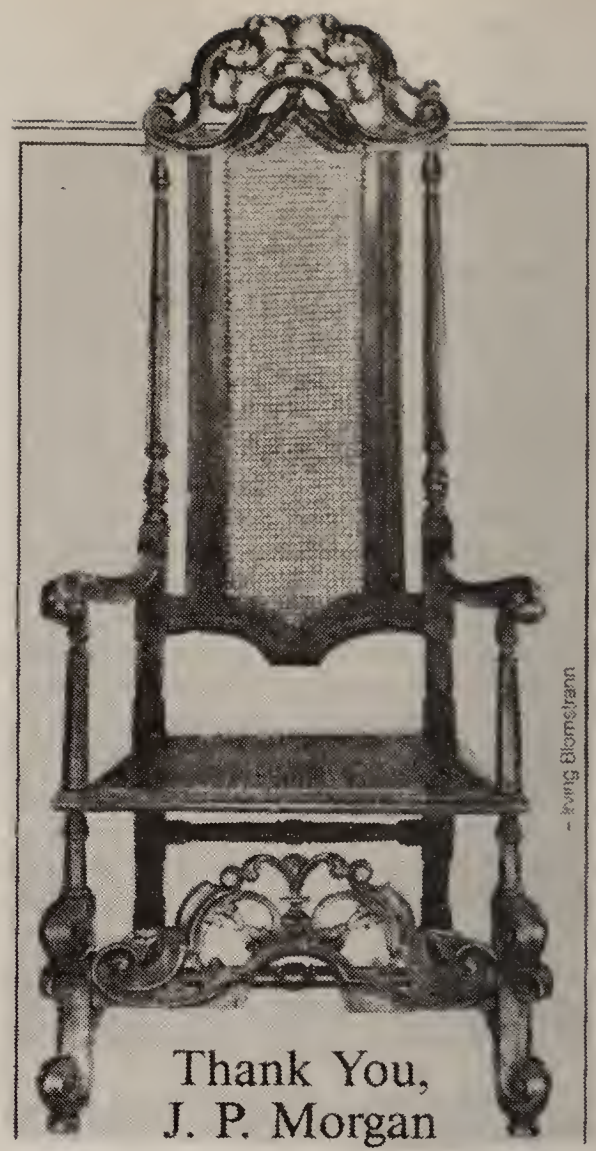
The Levi Nutting house, now owned by the Robert Garrabrants, in process of repair. Note lumber removed from the house, and the 19th century scallop trim along the gable end. (M. Elliott, 1985)



The remodeled George Nutting house, which is pictured at an earlier date on p. 106 of this book. (M. Elliott, 1985)



Map drawn from memory by Elijah Nutting in 1853, at the age of twelve. He had left with his family for the "West" in 1852. They went via New York State, arriving in Faribault, MN in 1855. There in his later life he set up business with his son Walter. The latter's daughter, Mrs. Ruth Nutting Shaft, accompanied her father here to prepare the genealogy, ***"John Nutting of South Amherst."*** *She resides in Faribault, and is involved with the still-prospering business which they established. In Nuttingville, Ebenezer Nutting and son Porter manufactured wooden tools and furniture along Mechanic St. just south of Bay Road (see Mill Pond on map). His brother Truman operated a sawmill and shop from water power farther upstream. The Haywards made baby carriages at the lower end of the brook near its intersection with So. East St. (near Lymans'), which fact gave Baby Carriage Brook its name. (W. Nutting's* ***John Nutting of South Amherst****)*



*Chair designed by Wallace Nutting, given to the Wallace Nutting Collection at Hartford, CT, by J.P. Morgan, who purchased the collection from Nutting in 1925 for a museum. According to Ruth Nutting Shaft of Faribault, MN, granddaughter of Elijah Nutting of So. Amherst, Wallace may be a distant Nutting cousin, but not proven. Wallace, a minister in Seattle, WA, later moved to Farmingham, MA, where he started hand-tinting his photographs of rural New England, now collectors' favorites. Having no descendents, he bequeathed his equipment and drawings to Berea College, Berea, KY. (***Yankee*** magazine, Sept. 1984, and Ruth Nutting Shaft.)*



This house at 734 Bay Road with the same gable trim as the Levi Nutting house is presently owned by Prof. Daniel Krause. Alice King reports that Mr. and Mrs. Horace Grosvenor lived both here, and across the street at 737. Mrs. Horace Grosvenor was daughter by first wife of Edwin A. Bolter, not Edward C. Bolter. The Russell Slocoms lived here in 1950. (M. Elliott)



The simple lines of Ed. C. Bolter house, 737 Bay Road, of uncertain ownership in intervening years. Edward, son of Ziba, was the father of Leon who wrote the letter on page 108 to W.H. Atkins. James Crowley restored the house in 1967, and Lawrence Pinkham, buying it in 1972, built the barn. The Stephen Coelens live there now. (M. Elliott, 1985)

DAVID AND WIN

Hartford Courant staff

William Cockerham

July 3, 1983

When Win Shumway, 89, drives into town with a load of vegetables or flowers more than one person has been heard to say, "There goes the best Christian in Amherst."

More than likely, Shumway is accompanied by David Goodrich, an 82-year-old gnome-like man with large pointed ears who Shumway informally adopted 68 years ago.

They've been almost inseparable ever since, this tall, lean farmer and the little man with the heart of a leprechaun and the mind of a child.

The love and care Shumway has given his retarded charge over the past six decades helped him win a Distinguished Citizen's Award in this Massachusetts college town several years ago.

During an era when most retarded people were hidden away in institutions, the decision by Shumway to take in Goodrich comes across as something special to people here.

The third-generation farmer with bleached-denim blue eyes and shock of white hair only shrugs his shoulders, though, when he hears people talking about his Christianity.

Although Shumway has been on the rolls of the South of the South Congregational Church for more than 50 years, he hasn't stepped inside in years.

"I don't have time to go to church. They hold their meetings on Sundays, you know," he said, a smile as wide as a furrow crossing his weathered face. "People ask me if I go to that church. I tell them I go by it six times a day."

The Rev. Arnold Kenseth said Shumway is one of those people who just doesn't need much church-going: "He's a man who knows God from the good earth."

Kenseth can recall Shumway and Goodrich walking through the well-turned fields on many a morning.

"Win would say, 'Is God good to us today, David?,' and David would reply, 'You bet your life'."

Goodrich, whose mental age has never developed beyond that of a child, lived across the street from the Shumway farm in South Amherst at the turn of the century.

The farmer said he can remember seeing Goodrich, then 14, running home from school one day his arms flailing "and crying his heart out."

"I was plowing the field when David came up to me, his report card in his hand. He had spent six years in the first grade and they were holding him back again. I took his report card and told David, 'I'm going to graduate you.'. Then I tore up his card, started up the horses and plowed it under," he said.

Shumway's daughter, Marion Anot of St. George, Maine, recalls hearing about that June day.

"Tears streamed down David's face as he told my father that he didn't want to go back to school. 'Those dumb teachers,' he was saying. He blamed them. My father took him in his arms and said, 'That's all right David, you don't have to go back'."

From that day on, Goodrich lived on the Shumway farm. The farmer said he and his late wife got permission "to sort of adopt" Goodrich from his family. It was a large, poor family that was having difficulty making ends meet, said Shumway.

Shumway and Goodrich have become closer since the farmer's wife died 26 years ago. It is a rare moment today when the two men aren't together, riding a golf cart around the large farm, taking a walk in downtown Amherst or just sitting together in one of the three, large greenhouses on the Shumway property.

There are no lofty conversations between them; their affection for each other and the land they work need few words.

"He's been a great companion to me," Shumway said. "Ninety out of a hundred things around here he couldn't do, but he could hoe and run the horses and lift flats. He was a very handy boy."

Kenseth said Goodrich comes across as "a glad man inside, but I know he worries about Win sometimes. When Win was in the hospital (earlier this year), David was very upset. When Win's around, he feels very secure."

Shumway, recovering now from an abdominal operation, said he is constantly surprised at the things Goodrich has come out with since he moved in with him and his family.

He said during World War II, the Commonwealth draft board ordered Goodrich to report for a physical, despite Shumway's repeated letters and telephone calls informing them he was retarded.

"People teased David about being drafted. David told them he was going to hang himself with a rope rather than go. When they asked how, he told them he was going to tie one end of the rope around his neck and the other from a car door handle," Shumway said.

Shumway said the draft board spent little time talking with



Dave and Win with Mary Thayer Wheelock, a Nutting descendant, on the occasion of her 100th birthday, November 20, 1983. (S. Rainford)

Goodrich before they sent him back to the farm.

"A few months later, we are all sitting around the radio when someone announced that President Roosevelt had died. We were all stunned, but do you know what David said? He stood up and said, 'There! The sonofabitch didn't get me, did he?'," the farmer recalled.

Over the years, Goodrich has become one of the most beloved people in this small town. His birthday has become something of a community event.



A genuine Paul Revere bell in the belfrey of the So. Congregational Church. (Photo by Kent Nygren, 1985)

"He rings the bell at the church on his birthday. When he was younger, he was quite a lusty bell ringer. He rang the bell far beyond his age. Now, he's satisfied with just ringing it four or five times," Kenseth said.

Goodrich really enjoys his birthday.

"He gets free ice cream, free movies — anything he wants," the minister said.

At the town's annual Fourth of July parade, Goodrich, dressed in a baseball or police officer's cap and carrying a billy club and handcuffs, leads the procession. He will again Monday.

"When we saw David, we'd all know the parade was about to begin," said Kenseth. . . .

But one can't think of Goodrich without thinking of Shumway, a man whose selflessness is legend in Amherst.

Through the years, Shumway and his late wife befriended anyone who knocked at their farmhouse door. During the Depression, hobos were treated so well by the Shumways that the telephone pole out in front was notched in a code that identified the farm family as an easy mark. . . .

When Shumway received his Distinguished Citizen's Award, Kenseth wrote to the local newspaper saying he couldn't think of anyone who deserved it more.

He described Shumway as a man who couldn't bear cruelty.

Kenseth said more than once, when Shumway saw something wrong, he would simply mutter, Goddammit, it just ain't right."



Bill Shumway's Archery Group in March 1942, shown north of Win Shumway's, l. to r. Back row: Bob Stedman, Bill Shumway (leader), Duane Smith, Jr., Bill McKeeman (deceased); Front row: Dick Stedman, Fred McKeeman, Bill Kershlis (Wilbur "Bill" Shumway)



A baseball diamond northeast of So. Congregational Church was laid out when land along Pomeroy Lane, northside, used as a ball field, was sold for a horse pasture. Lowered roof of former Morell barn shelters hay cut below the Atkins orchard. (H. Hutchings, 1972)

THE LEDGE OFF SHAY STREET



Miss Young at the Ledge between 1903 and 1914. (Marian Hawthorne Lyman)

A South Amherst grade school teacher, Miss Young, who boarded with other teachers at Mrs. David Hawthorne's on South East Street, stands in front of "Sunset Rock" on Howland's property south of Shay Street, today hidden by bushes and not open to the public.

From Clara Dwight we have a picture of the same Ledge in the pasture of Dan Dickinson, later owned by such people as Munson, Howland, Smith, and Gage. Through those years the public was free to go there for Easter Sunrise services and, during the early twenties at least, the community held a fireworks display at the rocks.



A picture in Dan Dickinson's pasture, (at the turn of century) now hidden in the bushes. (Clara Dwight)

I recall one disappointing evening fireworks display, July 4th on the Ledge. An errant rocket caught fire and set off a box of other rockets. In a few moments all the fireworks near the rocks ignited and, as the boys said, "All hell broke loose!" Some people laughed but I, a 6 year old child, was terribly disappointed. I had looked forward to the "Fourth" every summer. The cars started up to return home. We got into ours and went too, but I never forgot my shock at the destruction of so much expected pleasure and my disappointment. Today the rocks are unknown to the general public. Ideally, the area, it seems to me, should be purchased, if at all possible, and become again a public vantage point.

HAVE A 'SWITCHEL'?

Marjorie Atkins Elliott

One name for a drink of the past included "shrub," a drink that Uncle Charles put up at the Canning Lab. Another was a drink made by dad that had no name.

A concoction I associate with hot summer afternoons in haying season was made when dad came up the cellar stairs, sweat under his hat brim, to make a drink for the men down in the field.

A great bustling ensued. Molasses, sugar, ginger were words I heard. I looked at the gallon jug — or was it a two? — that he carried. (Maybe it was a small milk can with a handle.)

There was a noisy stirring of the concoction. The cold water faucet ran again. Mother chipped ice from the cake in the icebox on the porch. More sugar? A taste or two more, and off dad went, hat on again, disappearing rapidly down the stairs and off to the men in the hay fields.

I basked in the shaded kitchen, realizing though it was hot indoors, it was terribly hot under the sun, loading hay.

It is only a memory now, but Claire Hopley's column in the *Amherst Bulletin*, July 10, 1985, gave the recipe that dad "carried in his head" from his youth in the hills of Granville, Mass.

It was "switchel" — from Leverett, Mass., and "Leverett's Collected Recipes" compiled by their Historical Society.

Haymaker's Switchel

Mix: 1 gallon water
2 cups sugar
1 cup molasses
1 cup vinegar
1 teaspoon ginger



A well-placed harpoon fork lifting hay off the wagon, into Atkins' barn; Cliff Tiffany having "set" the fork, watches. Is it too big a "bite"? (Atkins, 1928)



Ice harvest at Miller's Falls, 1920. Men using ice saws after squares have been scored by a horse pulling a "toothed" plow. Man facing front is separating a cake from the floe of eight cakes. (Stephen Puffer, Jr.)

HARVESTING ICE
by Marjorie Elliott

Each winter the men worked at the Morell pond to cut ice. After scraping off the snow they hitched a horse, to an ice plow with teeth, to mark off square cakes of ice. One day the horse broke through. There it was! The men got him out. There was nothing to do but to get the freezing animal back in the barn, two miles away, and rub him down.

So Wes Wentworth, being younger, and able to ride a horse bareback like any farm boy, climbed on the shivering horse and was off at a gallop up Depot Road. I did not see it but anyone looking out at a horse galloping mid-day up the snow-covered street must have wondered what Wes' purpose was! He got back to the horse stable.

Peter Couch, who was in the barn working on inside chores on such a cold day, joined Wes and helped him rub the horse down. By now my dad had come out from the house and checked the exhausted but warmed-up horse. Was there anything else to do? Peter told him, "If you have any whiskey or something like that in the house, Mr. Atkins, that would fix up the horse O.K." I would guess that neither hired man thought a church man like dad would have anything like that around. He went back into the house and, according to Wes today, dad brought out some rye whiskey. Old Peter poured it down the horse's throat, and sure enough the animal never developed even a sniffle.



McIntire property at 891 Bay Rd., from the back of Long mountainside lot. (McIntire to Elliott)

THE GEORGE BOLTER PLACE
891 Bay Rd.
Two Letters from Betty Bourgeois

July 28, 1985

Dear Marjorie Elliott:

Thank you for the lovely picture of my house and your interest concerning the Mattie Bolter house. George McIntyre was my father. In Oct. 1946 my mother, father and I bought the Mattie Bolter house from Salvatore Vasquez who had bought it from Mattie Bolter four or five years earlier. I understand Vasquez sold because of the "voices" they heard on certain windy nights. We also "heard the voices" but found it was asbestos paper that had been wrapped around the chimney in the attic.

When I got married in 1953 my husband and I were going to build a house up in the orchard but my father and mother felt the farmhouse was too big for them so instead we built the small house attached to the greenhouse for them. . . .

I know the picture that you mentioned of Uncle John, taken in the living room when we had removed the old plaster and exposed the plank walls. Uncle John Mottram was my father's uncle from Easthampton. He was married to my father's aunt who raised my father after his parents died. Jack and Dot Beers were only friends of ours from Connecticut who, I believe, took the picture because they were here helping us remove plaster.

As to the age of the house, I never did trace it back but Dot and Ken Thayer who lived in the old salt box across the street said that when they were tracing their house which was built, as I remember them saying, around 1730-1740, they said they had indications that ours was built around 40 or 50 years later.

One interested feature of the house is the kitchen wing attached to the original Cape. According to Mr. Peter Couch who owned the farm next door when we moved here, it was a building on South East Street near the common which was moved on a sled one winter around the turn of the century. He remembered seeing it being moved when he was young.

How they found a building that would fit in between the house and the carriage sheds is hard to believe. The wall between the kitchen and the older house is about one foot thick because it contains the timbers as well as outside clapboards on both buildings. On the other end next to the carriage shed it is about one and a half feet thick and again has the timbers from both buildings as well as clapboards on the kitchen and the plank boards of the carriage shed. At both ends there is not even an inch between the original outside walls. . . .

Aug. 5, 1985

. . .Mattie was married to ~~George~~ Chas. Bolter. I heard she was much younger than he, thus was a widow for a long time. I believe this house belonged to several generations of Bolters, because Mrs. Kenneth Thayer said there were a lot of good antiques here when Mattie sold out.

Mattie not only sold vegetables to Charles Miller's canning plant, but she also did some butchering. Fred Colby (once selectman and near neighbor east) was always amazed when he drove by and saw the lights on, and he remembered when Mattie used to butcher his pigs and the carcasses would be on the floor, now my den with bookcased walls! . . .

Sincerely, Betty Bourgeois

A BIT OF YANKEE HUMOR

You had to know W.H. Atkins and his Yankee humor and Biblical background to savor this story . . . George McIntire, with his daughter and son-in-law had bought the Bolter property for $8,500, coming to Amherst first in 1940 — so he told me. "I was uptown" he said, "and saw this big man walking toward me and recognized he must be the W.H. Atkins I had heard of but not met."

"This man stopped there on the sidewalk and greeted me pleasantly and said, 'You bought G.B.'s house?'."

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"You know, you're living in 'heathen village!'." Shook hands and left.

"I puzzled over that. It wasn't until I talked with my brother in Longmeadow, MA, that I learned what was meant; it related to the Seventh Day Adventists who, at the turn of the century had been converted to work on Sunday and worship on Saturday. 'Sodom and Gomorrah" was another word I sometimes heard describing those old days of 'back-sliding' and the area they inhabited."



Lyman Thomson's sheep, Mill Valley, 1950. Geo. McIntire also raised sheep. Hampshire College has a flock at a farm north of former Parker farm. (Lyman Thomson [1901-1979] to Elliott)



Nuttingville Center in 1800's. Old Bay Rd. in foreground branching into So. East St. Site of Methodist church off picture at left. Sign says: "Northampton" to left; "Belchertown" to right. Car behind sign. (W.M. Nutting, 1925)

ALFRED S. GOODALE
(from Amherst Record 1950)

Prof. Alfred Shepard Goodale, 74, who made his home on Bay Road, then at the Lord Jeffery Inn, died on Friday, February 16, 1950, at the Cooley Dickinson hospital after a long illness. He was born in Amherst on May 8, 1876, the son of Lt. Charles L. and Mary Shepard Goodale. On his mother's side he was a direct descendant of Major General William Shepard, who served on the staff of General Washington.

He was graduated from the Amherst High School in 1893, and from Amherst College in 1898. He was registrar at Amherst College from 1902 to 1918 and associate professor of botany at Amherst College, retiring in 1941. Prof. Goodale was the developer and director of the Amherst College wild life sanctuary in 1933. He was a member of the honorary society of Phi Beta Kappa, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a former member of the American Fern Society, of the New England Botanical Club, of the Torrey Botanical Club of New York City, and of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Prof. Goodale was a member and former trustee of the South Congregational Church. . . .

Under his administration, the Herbarium at Amherst College increased from $15,000 worth of specimens to about $83,000 worth. Special attention was centered on collecting plants of the local flora, and the Amherst College collection is considered to be preeminent. . . .

Burial will be held later in the South Amherst cemetery.

A STORY HANDED DOWN
Carpenter and Morehouse p. 299

"Lyman Knowles began the manufacture of carriages in a shop fronting on 'the Green' at South Amherst about 1827. In 1830, he removed to East Amherst, where in partnership with Asahel Thayer he carried on a large business in the manufacture of fine carriages under the firm name of Knowles & Church, endowed with all the shrewdness and sagacity in bargaining proverbial in Yankee deacons. A story is told of him, in the time when the carriage-making industry was in its infancy and the members of the firm were their own traveling salesmen. Dea. Thayer had a carriage built for the president of a bank in Greenfield. Especial pains was taken in its manufacture, the best of materials being employed. The night succeeding the day when the last coat of varnish was applied was bitter cold and the varnish cracked badly. Another coat was applied but this served only to bring out the markings in bolder relief. The deacon started for Greenfield with three carriages, including the one of special make. Having disposed of two carriages, he called on the bank president and told him that he had a chaise of superior quality for sale, adding there is only one man in the United States who can do that kind of work." The president inquired the price, and was told that he could have chaise and harness for $275. After a little bargaining a sale was effected at $250. There is no record to show if other carriages were adorned with the 'turtle-shell' finish."

CHARLES JEWETT DEAD; WAS AMHERST RESIDENT
December 8, 1950
W.H. Atkins

Charles Jewett, 91, of Stafford Springs died Monday the 4th of December. Mr. Jewett's boyhood and young manhood home was what is now the Arnold Foote farm.

Charles married and had his family at the old homestead while his father Sylvester and two unmarried brothers came to South Amherst about the year 1890. After the death of Mrs. Charles Jewett, Mr. Jewett left the farm to live with his son-in-law, Walter Goodale and his daughters Florence and Ida, the former the wife of Mr. Goodale. Mrs. Goodale died two years ago but Mr. Jewett continued in the home of his son-in-law Walter Goodale and daughter Ida.

Mr. Jewett is the last of six children, four boys and two girls. Two brothers in South Amherst, Fred and Cecil, who never married, died in 1943 and 1947 at the age of 80 and 95 years respectively. One daughter of father Jewett was the late Mrs. Charles H. Hayward of South East Street.

Sylvester Jewett, the father of this family, came to Pelham from Northampton at the middle of the last century. He was a man of exceptional ability, holding many positions of trust, and often substituting in preaching for the ministers in both Pelham and Amherst.

Walter H. Goodale, the son-in-law of Mr. Charles Jewett will be remembered as a station agent at the Central Vermont Depot in Amherst.



The Benjamin Ricci house at 615 Bay Rd., south side, (purchased in 1955 from the Jungs), was owned in the late 19th century by Chas. Goodale who fought in the Civil War. (The early barn was joined by pegs.) (Ben Ricci)



Four young historians who prepared the booklet ***Amherst Through the Years*** *in 1979. L. to R: Arati Kortar, Ben Whitaker, Michael Campbell and Martha Bridegam. (Picture courtesy of Marybeth Bridegam, Director of the project.)*

AMHERST OF '20 AND '30; What a place to grow up!

I spent several moments flashing back to Amherst in the 1920's and early '30s. Thoughts like peddling papers for Asa Hastings (but he was Mr. Hastings to me), remembering the Jones Library when it was in the old block on the southwest corner of Amity and So. Pleasant streets where the bank is now; Jackson & Cutler Dry Goods; Ed Harvey's Market (I worked for "Uncle Ed") and below him Mrs. Musante's Candy Store where I bought many a bag of penny candy or peanuts. Barsellotti's was on the other corner of Amity and No. Pleasant and I bought a few sundaes there, too. Going down Main Street there was "The Greeks" — The Candy Kitchen — run by Charlie Sarris, E.M. Bolles Shoe Store was there somewheres and Mr. Mitchell's candy store — and Mrs. Mitchell's white wagon — that was always at the Amherst College games and up on the campus, selling hot dogs, candy and I forget what else. Walsh's Clothing Store and the U.S. Post Office were the last places before the alley, at the end of which the *Amherst Record* was published. Across the street was Sing Lee's Chinese Laundry, where I learned about Litchi nuts before I was big enough to know what they actually were.

Charlie Powers was called Mr. Fix-it. Did you know he was also an expert in pewter? Ask the C.R. Elder family how many times Charlie made their heirloom pewter as good as new when it was somehow damaged. Ask any one of a dozen families who lived on farms around Hadley, No. Hadley, No. Amherst and Sunderland whose equipment he fixed and when they said, "I pay you when crop comes in," Charlie accepted their word. It was he who taught me about people, too. I might add those same farmers never neglected their just debts, either.

Melvin Graves was Chief of Police in those days; in fact he was THE police force. If Melvin said "Git" we generally "Got" as rapidly as possible 'cause a resounding cuff was on its way if you didn't "Git" and Mel had a hand akin to a good size ham. Sometimes I think that's what a good many young folks today need most when they step out of line. I don't recall that any of us boys were actually afraid of Mel Graves but we respected profoundly the law he represented. Mel Graves had a cruiser, too; a Model T Ford and it was decidedly leaning to the left after a few years. Well, if 230 pounds sat on you you'd lean, too!!!



A 1922 Scott postcard of the first Amherst library; entrance on Amity St. side, up a long flight of wooden stairs. NO ONE SPOKE above a whisper. To the right the old livery stable; beyond that the Amity Street Academy. (Elliott)

I remember trolley cars, dirt roads, the horse fountain by the Town Hall, the taxi-drivers like "Speedy Pete" Patenaude and H.A. Kellogg and others whose names I can't recall.

Yup, it was pretty wonderful to grow up in Amherst in those days. It was even better when you had a Daddy like I did: Charlie Powers.

Richard J. Powers
10 Wayne Court, Holyoke

TENDING A COAL-FIRED FURNACE

I was twelve. It was 1930.
For 6 years I tended the
family's coal-fired furnace
in Holyoke, Mass.
October 22, 1984

Geraldine Harris Fritzmeier

"Since my father died when I was 4½ years old, my mother had the responsibility of the household but when I was 12 years old she had a stroke which made it very difficult for her to climb stairs. My older sister had always been frail so it became my job to tend the fire. It was furnace (steam heat with radiators which klunked when they were heating up in the cold morning). A day's routine as I remember it was to go to the basement about 6 AM, shake down the fire, shovel coal in the door, open the drafts in the pipe and open the bottom door. Then go up two flights of stairs and crawl back in bed to wait until the house warmed up. After the fire got going good, we dressed and I checked the fire, shoveling on more coal and shutting drafts so it would burn but not too high for the rest of the day. Then I would shovel out all the ashes from the bottom of the furnace into two pails and leave them to cool.

In the afternoon when I returned from school I would go into the basement, take the pails of cool ashes and carry them to a big wooden box which had been built in the basement for this purpose. This box was about 9'x6'x4'. I lifted the lid and poured the ashes into a square sifter with coarse wire mesh in the bottom. The sifter had a long handle on it which protruded through the side of the box and slid on two wooden runners the length of the box. The lid was closed and I pushed the sifter back and forth to get the ashes out with the clinkers being left behind. After the dust had settled, I opened the lid, poured the clinkers into an empty pail and repeated as many times as was necessary.

When it was time to go to bed, I shook the fire down and covered the coals with the clinkers which held the fire until the next morning.

This is to give you some idea of the process I had to use with our furnace. When I was 18, I was relieved to have my mother decide to install an oil furnace. What a treat to sleep in the morning and just run downstairs and flip a switch!

One of our favorite drives on a Sunday afternoon was to start from home, go to Granby, Belchertown, Amherst, (sometimes on to Northampton), and home. The drive through the "Notch" was beautiful in fall. Often we stopped in South Amherst to buy cider and/or apples, squash, onions, etc. I can remember when it rained we had to stop and put on the side curtains so we wouldn't get wet."

A Sampler of Poetry

Springing From South Amherst

TOWN OF AMHERST BICENTENNIAL
1759-1959



Amy Bridgman, poetess and member of So. Congregational Church, who wrote "The Centennial" hymn on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the church in 1924. Amy, born in 1865, was daughter of R. Baxter and Mary Bridgman and granddaughter of George Nutting, who built the church in 1824. (H. McChesney)

A Sampler of S. Amherst Poets
and two drawings

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THE CENTENNIAL HYMN

The years look down upon us,
As we, with backward gaze,
Review the long procession
Of swiftly-moving days;
In silence they are guarding
Yet waiting to unfold
The half-forgotten records
Which they serenely hold;

We there may read how simply
Our valiant fathers trod,
With high, unyielding purpose
They followed after God.
They saw Him on the mountain,
He walked upon the hill,
And glorying in the Vision
They strove to do His will.

To Him they raised this temple,
Their lives were with it bound,
Though dead, they still are speaking
Of blessing sought and found;
They brought with deep devotion
Their common pains and joys,
And here they found their heaven
Above earth's trivial noise.

The years look down upon us,
We meet their solemn gaze,
We see the hand prophetic
Which they in warning raise;
Their watchword is "Remember!
Dim not the Vision true
But give your children's children
What we have kept for you!"

—Amy Bridgman

TAKE ME BY SWIFT ASSAULT

Take me by assault, not siege, I am not brave.
I've but the coward's counterfeit, conceit
That quails before slow-sapping strategy.
Since ultimately, either way, the grave
Still spells surrender unconditional,
Almost I wish that life had been less sweet
So might there seem some music in the bell
Dividing finite from infinity.

Some, of life's crumbling masonry create
For the soul's escape a glorious citadel,
Retiring triumphant from the worthless shell.
Lest I strike colors cravenly, nor wait
The final flutter of a final breath,
Take me by swift assault, not siege, O Death!

—Jessie V. Thayer



The poet, Jesse Vallentine Thayer, of 706 So. East St., Amherst, author of this poetry collection by her Smith College classmates of 1901, on the occasion of her death in 1939. Title, "Take Me By Swift Assault." (The name Vallentine was her father's, spelled "d'Vallentine.") "And she went quickly," says her son. "She was giving a talk in some little village toward Belchertown . . . She did not last an hour." (C.V. Thayer)

Through the everyday happenings of Hickory Farm in Amherst (Massachusetts) are preserved the best of New England and of a New Englander.

Robert Francis, one of her fellow poets in Amherst, wrote of Jessie Thayer: "Mrs. Thayer did not toss off poems and then forget about them as some poets are reputed to do. A new poem was an event, important enough and exciting enough to make her leave home in the dead of winter and drive five or six miles over snow and ice to the house of a fellow poet for a friendly overhauling of the newborn. Usually she would bring a gift from the farm, say a jar of heavy cream or some mammoth eggs. But the real purpose of the visit was the poem. She used to say that the only place she could write was at her kitchen table. Whoever saw her kitchen might understand. In winter it was a small edition of the outdoor world of summer. The windows were full of plants with big tropical leaves and drooping clusters of blossoms. Pans of cream and pails of eggs stood here and there. Clothes hung drying on a line. Cats glided in and out. The kitchen table was also the dining table. It was a busy place. A new poem had to make room for itself. Having made room, it was very much at home there. Poetry had only one or two competitors — horses and haying. I believe Mrs. Thayer got a deeper satisfaction in cutting a straight swath with the mowing machine than she did in writing a poem about it."



PELHAM HILLS

The farm lies tilted toward the morning sun,
And from its brow the sight is fair to see.
All up and down the valley floor for miles
You look, and always last the lingering eye
Lifts to the long sweep of the Pelham Hills.

One day last fall, I found the farm wife there
Upon the farm's brow, flocked about by hens.
They craned a questing eye at pails of corn
That tugged at either hand, the while she gazed
Upon the hills, and heeded neither pails
Nor hens, nor me, until I spoke to her.

It was a weakness with her, she confessed;
A habit that had grown since that first spring
They came to live there, twenty years ago.
Much time she'd squandered looking at those hills,
A minute here, each day, five minutes there;
If time were money, now, a tidy sum
'Twould total in a year, and that times twenty.

Not quite a dead loss, though, because the hills
Had come to be a daily bulletin
From which she gleaned items of interest
The Great Reporter chose to issue there.

'Twas to the hills they always looked, she said,
For that small cloud no bigger than man's hand,
First harbinger of rain in time of drought,
Grown weather-wise of wind and cloud, 'twould rain,
If ever you heard Old Pelham church-bell ring,
For forty days and nights, or thereabouts.

And come to think of it, why, each new day,
Yes, every one they'd had for twenty years,
Had come straight to them from these very hills.

Every day, now, she said, for three October weeks,
I've said, " I don't believe it," yet every day
For three long weeks, they've come to be
More unbelievable! The hillsides marched
In serried rainbows — maple, shagbark, birch,
Hemlock, oak and pine — the spectrum gone
Stark mad! Blue? Oh, there was blue enough —
The blue that's neither here nor there — the blue
That stands between on autumn days — the blue
You would expect, all mystic, magical,
If you should rub a jinnee lamp — that blue.

The hills were hers in every subtlety
Of mood and varying phase of season's change;
Their overtones of minor notes, in gray
Veiled dawns; their challenge to the dying day,
When sunset's last salute draws answering fire
From each remote, lone, westering windowpane.

" Suppose," I said, " you could recall those hours
You've spent hill-reading; would you maybe spend them
To some better purpose? " " No, not one hour! "
Her arms, swift cradling, held elusive treasure.
" I'd dole them out, each day a minute here,
Five minutes there, for twenty years to come,
In looking yonder at the Pelham Hills."

—Jessie V. Thayer

PUTTERING

The children sleep; the winter evening wanes.
My husband shuts his book, stands up, and treats
His inmost being to one long-drawn yawn.
" I'm going to bed," he says, and forthwith goes,
But always, in the doorway, halfway turning,
He thumbs the clinking latch and asks, " You coming? "
And always to the closing door I answer —
" Yes — why — yes, I'm coming, right away " —
And always, strange enough, I think I mean it.

Yet when I've heard the creaking fourteenth stair,
I wait for that decisive second shoe's
Concussion with the floor. Half-guilty then,
I enter into secret rendezvous
With that one hour of the day that's mine.

The ancient farmhouse sleeps: the hour is mine!
It sleeps — but not yet is it tucked in bed.
A farmhouse must be put to bed in winter:
That occupies me this last quiet hour.
Tomorrow I'll account for it, no doubt.
" What do you find to do? " Himself will say.
(A man works, as we know, from sun to sun.)
And I shall make some weak, evasive answer,
Not sure, myself, just how the hour slipped by.
Tonight I'm going to be methodical,
Time takes advantage of a putterer.

Now then, I'll start by putting out the cat.
I peel her from the cushioned rocking-chair —
Not a bone in her, just soft sleep and fur.
But when I open the south-entry door
She arches into sudden sinewy action,
Glaring anathema in green-gold fire
And mutters, under breath, " How can you do it? "

No moon tonight: this is a night of stars,
Of cold white stillness and of watchful stars
That bristle at each other's glittering fangs.
Orion swings him down the western trail,
His jeweled scabbard clashing against his thigh.
I breathe three breathfuls of the winter night,
Spiced with the pungent scent of wood-fire smoke —
Three breaths before my nostrils seal with cold.
Small need, then, to consult man-made device
To gauge how much " below " 'twill be by dawn.
I bar the door, not that we've aught to steal,
But decent habit's law will be obeyed.
(O yes, we've wealth of sorts, but not the kind
That's pilfered and makes thieves break through and steal.)
And now, once more, I will put out the cat,
Resistance rampant in each crackling hair.
(She came in while I star-gazed at the door.)
The north door, this time, head her toward the barn.
I hear our good black Morgan make her bed.
Old Max and Major in their bedded stalls,
Man-like, expect to have theirs made for them,
But she will make her own or stand all night.
A few more strokes — she's folding back the sheet —
Now folds herself in thirds, with one long " T-h-e-r-e! "



A snapshot of Jessie Thayer's two beloved horses, Max and Morgan, at their manger doors, that kept the cold stable warm when raised in winter. (C.V. Thayer)

The kitchen stove my ministration claims.
I lift the lid, and there it stands and begs,
Red mouth wide open, an expectant O,
Waiting to see what I am going to feed it.
Benign old Moloch in the " other room "
Has very simple but Gargantuan tastes.
Feed him one great cross section of a tree,
He'll chew on it, content, a night and day,
But this one diets with a nice discretion.
Tonight the fire not only has to last,
But also burn and keep the great room warm.
A balanced ration is in order now:
One seasoned hickory log and one new felled;
One to encourage, the other to endure.



Jessie Thayer and her children, Kasha (a Polish name) and Chas. Vallentine (after his granddad). Charles, now married, lives in Springfield, VT, and graciously lent pictures and the volume of poetry. (C.V. Thayer)

Let's see, some talk there was of buttons — yes,
There *was* a button, " just got to be sewed on."
I sew it on — a most strategic button.

I next sort out a good two-bushel lot
Of heterogeneous footgear, mittens, gloves;
Remate mismated thumbs; pair boots and shoes.
(Mute footnotes, mute, but eloquent, they help
To chronicle the day's activities.)
Give leather, rubber, felt or wool its due
Of space and heat about our household shrine,
About it and about, and evermore
I ponder the unsolved phenomenon,
How can a family of moderate size
Possess such number of extremities?

I measure out the coffee, spoon on spoon,
And fetch the butter jar. Butter can be
Harder than Pharaoh's heart on zero morns.
I chip a flinty slab from off the roll —
All this against the morning's exodus
When every moment's at a premium.
Tonight the stock of Time is under par.

I move the eggs — currency of our realm —
Six pails of currency I move with care
Southward from out the pantry's arctic chill
Beneath the kitchen table's temperate zone.
Newspaper, next, I shove between the plants
And ice-etched windowpane. The cactus tries
To hand it back to me. I'd miss those brave
Geraniums and fat twin fuchsia buds,
Angled in pink precision, pair to pair.

It's growing late. I'll just put out the cat.
(She came in while I listened at the door.)
She pads off barnward almost cheerfully,
Sustained by the martyrdom of three evictions.
One final glance at doors and test of dampers,
"And so to bed" (Pepys never knew the half
Of it) and put an end to puttering.

—Jessie V. Thayer

INTERRUPTED

She had been making buttonholes.
I found her needle set in its place
Beside the last stitch — set with the certainty
That speaks the skillful seamstress.
It held the waiting loop of thread from action.

She got up to start the evening meal.

Some hand must have stayed,
Some voice said, " Not tonight, nor any night again."
"Tonight they sup on memories long since prepared."

The time, the place, habit our own age,
All seated us around the empty board.
Empty? O it was spread with filling fare!
We feasted long — our cups were wells
That brimmed and brimmed again.
And through it all I saw — kept seeing
That latest thing to which she'd given life,
The thread's white G clef, coiled to spring!

—Jessie V. Thayer



"It wiggles and needs paint," of another porch post in another region. (Elliott)

THE OLD PORCH POST

How many useful things — and friendships, too —
We take for granted as long as they will function!
Today, I think for the first time, I *saw*
The old porch post. It wiggles and needs paint.
So many years, and oftener every year,
It's pulled me up and safely let me down
In all my exits and my entrances;
So unobtrusive and yet, always there.

The outermost frontier of Home's own core,
It's shared in countless greetings and farewells,
And once or twice it's helped take up the shock
Of news so heavy-freighted that it broke
Before it could be brought inside the door.

Here late at night I lean and look about,
And listen to the silence of the barn.
There is no sound that comes from barns at night
That is so good to hear as none at all.
I listen longer, nights when there are stars.

Upon our barn-peak stands the Polar Star,
Master of ceremonies old as Time.
In gorgeous pageant constellations wheel
Around the gable of our old gray barn.
And when I see the Dipper tilted to drain,
Its handle braced against the corn-crib roof,

I know that on Mount Orient's shaggy pate
I'll find Arcturus, Guardian of the Bear.
Or when Old Merlin, our great oak on the hill,
Gaunt elbows raised, tries on the Northern Crown,
That's Berenice's shimmering hair that's caught
On the lightning rod. Is that Cassiopeia's Chair
Capella's kids are dragging upside down?

There is one yearly rite the old post shares,
That I look forward to the most of all:
Our upland mowing, at its very edge,
Dips to a little hollow in the hill, —
A lovely spot, all open to the south,
But snugly wrapped about in hemlock shawls,
With a lichen-padded bowlder at its back;
So hidden you would hardly know 'twas there,
Till out from the hemlocks' heart, a young white birch,
Surprised, breaks covert in a leap of light.

Years ago, when we first came here to the farm,
We two, — before the children were — and all —
I'd know, the way he'd set the milk-pail down;
Just so, as if a jar would snap the spell!
(That's reasonable, — when you stop to thing of it.

But wait, I have not come to that, — not yet.)



Off on a honeymoon hike, through the Adirondacks, C.H. Thayer and bride, Jessie Vallentine. Notice their smart hiking apparel. (C.V. Thayer)

Each year when that wild Indian-giver, March,
Steals back at night peace-offerings made by day,
This eager thicket mothers in its lap
For a kind sun to warm, a little foundling
Pool, short-lived and parentless. Next June
'Twill be firm-footed mowing, — no frond of brake,
No cold-blooded flower, nor spike of sedge —
Even the back swath cuts clean timothy.
Here Spring comes first. I'll know the very hour!

So it has been, and so it is today;
At the beckoning of a finger, out I go,
Press head and heart to the old porch post and wait.

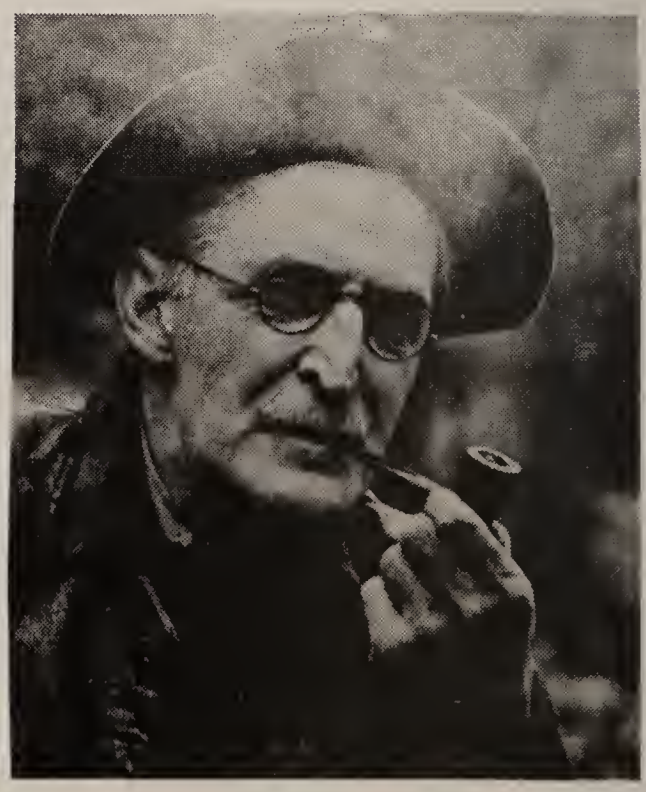
Now is the time when tenderest twilights fall.
Day never seems to loath to leave as now.
From down the hill a cool sweet wind is flowing,
Its fragrance half of earth and half of air,
And borne along in gusts of silvery sound,
Timing her first shy maiden steps, I hear
Antiponal hylas, the anklet bells of Spring!

New England winter, cruel, beautiful,
With wings for Youth; for Age, a ball and chain,
What else but you, endured, could bring me now
Such vital stab of joyous pointed pain?

At breakfast time, a son or daughter says,
"Oh, I forgot to tell you, Mother, —
Peep-frogs sang last night, you always like to know."

I answer, "Yes, I always like to know,"
And spill their father's coffee launched mid-air,
While we, our hylas sweeter for secrecy,
Read hiroglyphics in each other's eyes,
(The key to Love's Rosetta stone is Time)
And in our coffee drink a homely toast
To Understanding, that more than Love itself,
Can give to wedded years too swift a wing.

And now that I have told you all these things,
Will they ever be again the same to me?



Chas. Hiram Thayer, (a fine teacher, reports my brother Bill) Prof at "Mass. Aggie," known as "Old Hickory." He was dubbed "Paul Revere" by his students because he rode horseback to the college. Author of ***History of the Stockbridge House*** *at Mass. State College, 1936. (C.V. Thayer - Photo by Bob Coffin)*

OLD HORSE

" Grow old along with me." That fits you well.
I in my prime, you in your first full strength,
That long-ago spring day I brought you home.
The man who wrote that didn't mean a horse.
Perhaps he might have, though, if he'd owned you.
For twenty years we've been contemporaries —
Now it is spring again and you are gone.

Each limber strap, each well-worn buckle hole,
Brings back some line of you familiar as
This hand, and flocking memories of your long
Allegiance; pride that only love could humble;
Your vices, too, that really were your virtues
Too sharply edged by the deep wheel-rut of time.

You championed all off-side prerogatives.
Concessions must be made nigh-side the neap;
That other had to be there, — you saw that, —
To help hold up the neck yoke, but you held him
In low esteem. A nip for him — for me,
The understanding velvet of your nose.

You and I, always — *we* were the team!
To know each other's crotchets and respect them!
No innovations — proven ways were best —
Each year convinced you more and more of that.
We never did agree within two inches
On where a swath should end. For twenty summers,
Those two-inch tufts proclaimed the " better man."

Cranky and proud as ever you marched to your
Reward — testy because your stiff old knees
Would not obey the quick-step of your spirit.
A good end — swift death between the eyes
And a deep grave. No pensioned ease for you —
You hated idleness. You would have seen
Through it, and seeing, it would have galled your pride.

Well — I'll have to change this harness some,
In places. The land lies waiting for the plow.



Jessie Thayer and her beloved team, Max and Morgan, mowing hay east of the farm bldgs.; Depression era. (C. V. Thayer)



Gregory Webb, 1926-1983, Ph.D. in geology at Columbia. Taught at Amherst College and Univ. of Mass, 1959-83. A Renaissance man in the 20th century; civic-minded, wise in the knowledge and care of the earth, artist, active in So. Amherst Church. We gained in his having been; lose in his going. (Kenseth)



Church by Gregory Webb



Robert Francis
A CELEBRATION

In its March 10 issue, the *New York Times Book Review* recognized what Amherst has known all along — that Robert Francis is one of this country's "finest living poets." Now it's Amherst's turn to appreciate the man Robert Frost once called "the best neglected poet."
Please join the Jeffery Amherst Bookshop (in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts Press) in thanking Robert Francis for a lifetime of distinguished writing.

BOOK SIGNING
Saturday, April 13 11:00 — NOON

Books by Robert Francis: The Orb Weaver (1960), Come Out into the Sun (1968), The Satirical Rogue on Poetry (1968), The Trouble with Francis (1971), Frost: A Time to Talk, Conversations and Indiscretions Recorded by Robert Francis (1972), Like Ghosts of Eagles (1974), Robert Francis: Collected Poems (1976), A Certain Distance (1976), Pot Shots at Poetry (1980), Butter Hill (1984), The Satirical Rogue on All Fronts (1984).

FROM INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT FRANCIS
By Steven Ruhl
Amherst Bulletin/Wednesday, April 10, 1985

Bob Francis is still writing.

At 83, his body is frail and his steps are hesitant as he picks his way carefully through pines outside Fort Juniper, his cottage tucked in a patch of woods off Market Hill Road in Amherst. But his voice is firm. His mind is agile. And in the late years of his career, Francis is finally winning the broad acclaim that eluded him much of his life.

The New York Times Book Review devoted a full page last month on "The Man Robert Frost Called 'The Best Neglected Poet'," Last year Francis won the prestigious Academy of American Poets Award and published his ninth book of poems, "Butter Hill." IN 1983 the New England Artists Festival honored Francis, declaring him a "New England Living Art Treasure." He will sign copies of his books at a celebration given in his honor at the Jeffery Amherst Bookshop at 11 this Saturday. . . .

On writing poetry: "I can't tell how it happens really, a fusion of various things, a particular mood, I suppose. For me a poem often begins with an experience, recollection, or something I read. The headlines in the New York Times have given me two poems. What's true for me is true for any poet. Something someone says. I remember years ago in a department store two women looking at things. One said to the other 'Love it from a distance, Stella.' That so fascinated me. Often the germ of a poem can start with a chance remark someone has made. Once someone said to me, 'When I come, Bob, it won't be while I'm on my way going somewhere else."



Through all kinds of weather each Sunday this group quietly stood on Amherst Common for peace. (News release)



Old neighbor, previous owner of Cliff Tiffany house. (Alice Tiffany)

Old Man Feeding Hens

The oldest looking man, the slowest moving,
I ever saw, dressed all in somber black
And with a great December-snowdrift beard,
Leans on a staff and with his other hand
Feeds a few Barred-Rock hens from a slung
basket.

Neither the man nor hens make any sound
For me to overhear. One might suppose
That he had passed beyond the need of words,
Either to speak them or to hear them spoken,
And that his hens had grown into his silence.

The house beside him is a Barred-Rock gray
With not one windowsign of habitation.
Some day and soon it will have less than none,
And on that day the hens may not be fed
Till noon or evening or the second morning.

[Cecil Jewett] —Robert Francis

Prophet

With an appraising, practiced eye,
Smoking his pipe, he scans the sky

The smoke goes up to join the fog.
The fog comes down to join his thought.
Resting one foot on an old log
He contemplates what God hath wrought.

Smoke blowing west, smoke veering south—
He takes his pipe out of his mouth
And weighs the claims of rain and drouth.

In all fair weather he smells rain
So doggedly I wonder whether
He does not inwardly complain
That foul days sometimes breed fair weather.

But under his inscrutable sky
What can a prophet prophesy?

[Robert Thompson, south of parsonage]- Robert Francis

Artist

He cuts each log in lengths exact
As truly as truth cuts a fact.

When he has sawed an honest pile
Of wood, he stops and chops awhile.

Each section is twice split in two
As truly as a fact is true.

Then having split all to be split,
He sets to work at stacking it.

No comb constructed by a bee
Is more a work of symmetry

Than is this woodstack whose strict grace
Is having each piece in its place.

[George Dwight] —Robert Francis



Geo. Dwight, neighbor to the west, wearing a hat as farmers did. (Courtesy of Jones Library)

Breaking the Apple

He took the apple I had given him
In both his hands and broke it clean in two
By way of sharing half and half with me
And showing me a trick strong hands can do.

How neatly and directly it was done.
Here was a truth he never learned at school:
Bare hands are sometimes better than a knife;
The man may be superior to the tool.

[Frank Adamites) —Robert Francis

In Memory of Edith Pinnick

"Full of years and works . . ."

For all the voices
in our chorus, now

this unfamiliar
silence leaves us dumb.

We miss her, say,
because she was so 'young.'

More true to say
that what we miss in her

is age, the sum
of time that filled her voice,

and weighed and bent
and broke the body down

that was her thing.
We did not need her young;

we have been there
ourselves: what we shall mourn

is ripeness of
a sort so long in coming

gone so soon;
yet needed now as then

that years like hers
might lengthen all our days.

— Stanley Koehler —
Amherst

— John Maggs —
Set to music

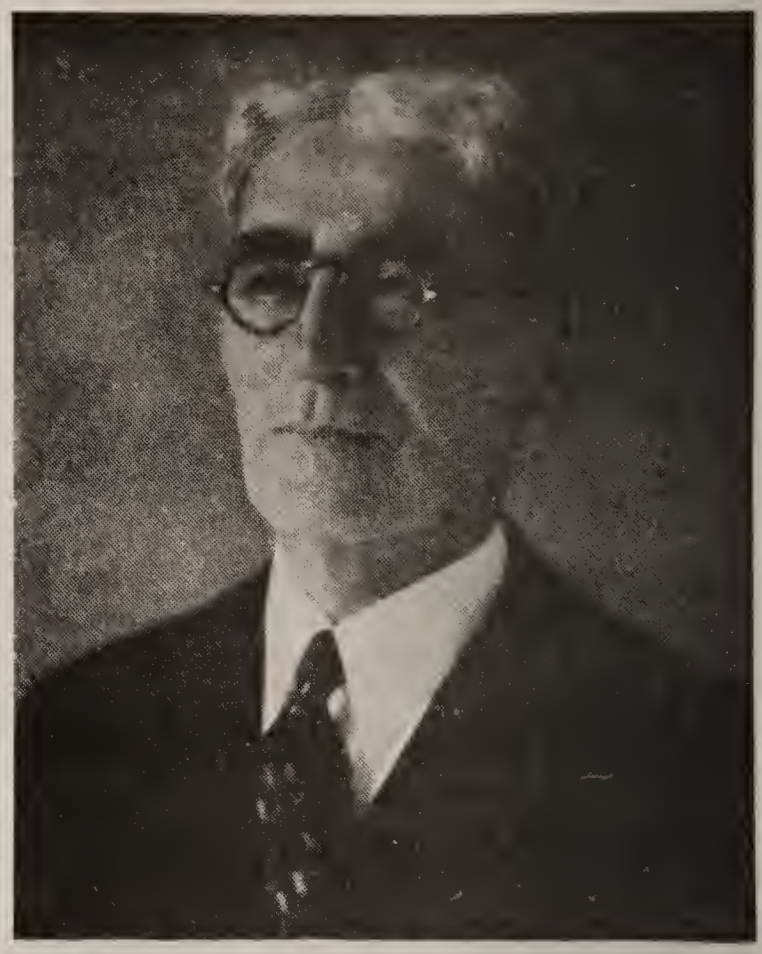
Given in the sanctuary of First Congregational Church. Dec. 2, 1974

Miss Pinnick retired in 1960 after teaching for 40 years in Amherst schools.

The Gardener

I watch an old man working in his garden
Dealing life to plant and death to weed,
Of one he saves, of one destroys the seed.
He knows the weeds and not one will be pardoned.
He bids the pea vines bloom and they obey.
He teaches them to climb. He tests a pod.
Much that another man might throw away
He saves, he forks it under for decay
To be another generation's need.
This is his work to do. This is his day.
He makes all birth and growth and death his deed.
Slowly he moves, but slow is not delay.
He has all time to work. I watch him plod.
Old man, old man, who told you you were God?

[Robert Thompson] —Robert Francis



Rev. Eben Fisher Francis, *Minister*

That Dark Other Mountain

My father could go down a mountain faster than I
Though I was first one up.
Legs braced or with quick steps he slid the gravel slopes
Where I picked cautious footholds.
Black, Iron, Eagle, Doublehead, Chocorua,
Wildcat and Carter Dome —
He beat me down them all. And that last other mountain
That last dark other mountain.

[Ebenezer Francis] —Robert Francis



"Old Merlin," the oak on Chas. H. Thayer's farm. (C.V. Thayer)

AMHERST POET WINS FIRST PRIZE IN 'AMERICAN' SCHOLAR' CONTEST

Amherst Record
June 4, 1959

Latest of the many honors accorded Amherst poets is the American Scholar poetry prize which was awarded to Arnold Kenseth, pastor of South Congregational Church, this week.

First prize in the contest was awarded to the poem, "Death and Resurrection," while the two other poems, which Mr. Kenseth also submitted reached the finals in the competition.

The basic image of the first-prize poem is of man likened to a house and estate which falls and is rebuilt.

Mr. Kenseth who came to Amherst as Protestant chaplain at the University of Massachusetts in 1947, has written poetry since he was 12 years old. His first published poem appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1940, although a number of others had appeared previously in high school and college publications.

Though a number of his poems appeared in such magazines as the *Atlantic, Poetry, A Magazine of Verse,* and the *Christian Scholar,* Mr. Kenseth's first volume of poetry was privately published in 1952. He is in process of preparing a second volume at present.

Of his work, John Holmes, a leading contemporary critic, said, "There is no poet quite like him in our times, blending an intensity of the spirit as pastor with a poetic gift, a pastoral eye and ear, and the truest sincerity of praise for God's world thereby. The words of the English language take on fresh power in his line, yet he is in the old great tradition as a religious poet." . . .

Pastor of South Congregational Church since 1949, Mr. Kenseth is a graduate of Bates College, has an M.A. from Harvard Graduate School and an S.T.B. from Harvard Divinity School.

He has taught at Cambridge Junior College where he "ended up by being dean" and taught Bible at Abbott Academy. His first church was Union Congregational Church in Andover from '43 to '47.



The Reverend Arnold Kenseth

Death and Resurrection
by Arnold Kenseth

I am your double, man, though first you will
me one estate: this meadowed flesh my bones
do comfort in; the blood's warm brooks that hill
and waterfall me through; my browsing senses
nostriled for adventure, five unicorns
that rampant in me run; the mind's huge barns
all atticed overhead with my pretenses,
all cellared underneath with my unknowns.

And here I, landlord, jubilant a while,
to store up meanings in the bins and ricks,
a sundial farmer faithful to my rites
as morning robins: except my brother sin,
prides in the yards and warfares at the gates.
And then my countryside is stones and sticks
and straw, and death soon wooden-fences in
the ruined body of my land all still.

Yet you recover me from my disgrace.
This little ground I am, this cipher earth
I corner in, this night that densely nights
me down to stay; you mine-field with the sun,
the fuse as long as love, the burst a birth,
a second world after the blackout's done:
And out of my debris you timber heights,
and into my despair you hammer grace.



He is married to the former Betty P. Amey at Philadelphia and they have three children Elaine, Geoffrey, and Evan. (A. Kenseth)

Canticle Autumn

This day, this day crisps
As the mists hover the meadows.
Grasses dry and bronze;
Weeds climb in colors.

Hear the wind bring
The blue north to our doorsteps.
Taste the apple airs.
Touch the elm gold.

Everywhere the fire dance begins
And the hidden drummers beat in our blood.

Oh, the Maker of heaven and earth is in this.
He gives these days we do not earn.

He maketh in us a joyful noise.
He sings us into the high season.

Glory glory glory. Amen.

—Rev. Arnold Kenseth
from ***Sabbaths, Sacraments and Seasons***



Herbert and Harriet Hutchings, So. East Street, beloved neighbors "just down the road." (M.A. Elliott)

The Anniversary
(For Herbert and Harriet Hutchings on their 50th; Sept. 10, 1983)

Come, neighbors, friends, and with us celebrate
Two gentle people wed for fifty years,
Whose life among us, day by day, endears
Us all. Theirs is the honorable estate

That marriage truly is when love is true
In those who truly love, who all their days
Put on the mind of Christ (as St. Paul says
We should) and give their hearts to me and you

And everyone who stops within their white house
On the hill, a windowed house for looking out,
An open house for coming in, a warming place
Where guests in season gather roundabout.

I think now of that kitchen in the sun,
A shower of postcards Harriet must share,
A bowl of apples, chocolate cake, and fun,
And Herbert smiling like a quiet prayer.

Herbert is kindness, Harriet kindness too.
The world is doubly kind. Because their days
Encompass us we thrive. Spacious the view.
This marriage shines and teaches us to praise.

—Arnold Kenseth



"Atkins Meadows" on Old Morell Farm. (M.A. Elliott '85)

September's Child
(For Elaine)

Two cows went ambling, and we saw them
Munch. We counted golden-rod, the untrim
Purple spikes and pinks along the road.
Killdeer cried, cried, cried us overhead.

Until we heard the summer pass us by.
Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye was what they said.
The cattails waited. Here and there were red
Bush blueberries; and, leaning down, the sky

Rested upon us. We thought together you,
September's child, born in the turning time
Waiting and warm before the bronze winds come
And the dark birds sift away from view.

It is your twenty-fourth year, as we talk
Your season. We are tuned into you now.
In Atkins meadow the bobolinks talk
Of generous loves and the straw grasses glow.

—Arnold Kenseth



Elaine Kenseth (A. Kenseth)

A POEM FOR DOCTOR IVES

(Read on Philip T. Ives Day, April 25, 1980)
Amherst Record

April 30, 1980

He is our clerk and holds our history
Writ in the great Clerk's Book and on his heart;
For in his first affections is this church,
Clapboard and wise, a meeting place for light;
A window on all seasons, meadows, trees;
A gathering room for prayers, bells, silences;
A space, and always time enough, to bow
Ourselves before the high God, for listening,
With children's voices running up the stairs.

He can remember "windows of agate,"
The dark pews, coming to church by wagon
In the summer, horse sheds, and ministers
By name: Gleason and Kerr, Francis, Thurston,
Hunt,
The genial "Toppie." He heard them all, joined
The Lord early, and went from Christian
Endeavor
Singing home, discovered girls, had punch
And cookies at the socials, found his first friends,
Found also grace and God's sweet charities.

All this he keeps and in his Book writes down
For them that after us will come to find
Us out, those with us now whose name touch back
Almost a century to country roads,
Wood stoves, and dances in the living room;
Pomeroy and Atkins, Dwight and Mary Wheelock,
Hutchings, Stiles, Lyman, Shumway, Wentworth,
Ives;
And some we have forgot: old Walter Hayward,
Schoonmaker, Howlett, Lowe, and Daddy Adams.

He is a public man, a hometown man
Open and fair. On meeting days a mind
Quick to the meaning, a mind affirming
The best of times, new ways, and hope, much
hope.
Yet, like a Rabbi, he reads well the law,
And is a shrewd man among the managers,
The tax collectors, and the Rotary.
Also he measures rainfall, snowstorms, droughts,
And weathers well with all who know him best.

A farmer's boy, he tasted hay and apples,
Poked cows into the barn, planted and reaped,
Caught brook trout, chopped wood and stacked it,
rode
The trolley cars to town, and fell in love.
He calls her Dorothy and to this happy day
Praises her at the gates, as Scripture says;
And beams and shines about two daughters
And about two sons who in their marriages
Extend the parent wisdom, humor, joy.
He is the sensible man who loves old hymns;
He is the passionate man who logically
Inscribes phrasings for warrants, motions, votes,
Yet blesses every matron with a kiss.
See him among us now aglow with pride
Not in himself but in this congregation,
Certain in friendships, open to the world.
May time be kind to me and write it down:
That I was pastor whilst he was the clerk.

—Arnold Kenseth

On the occasion of his retirement from 29 years as clerk of So. Congregational Church.

ITEM
News Release, March 30, 1975

Poet Maralee G. Davis (formerly of West Street), wife of William Carter Gibson of Juggler Meadow Road, Leverett, has been elected to membership in The Poetry Society of America . . . Her work is included in "How to Enjoy Poetry Without Being Afraid of It," published by Bobbs-Merril. The book is slanted toward high school and college students.

Davis is the mother of Mrs. Beverly Clarke of Amherst, Mrs. Susan English of Florence, and Mrs. Maralee Chris of Jackson, New Jersey.

Our Town by Roland Coe Amherst



"Maybe tomorrow night you can have the meat rare. Tonight it's gonna be well done again!"

Roland Coe, on Middle Street, well-known cartoonist whose work was seen in national magazines like ***Saturday Evening Post*** *and* ***Collier's.*** *(Amherst Record)*



No Storm Broke In

My childhood summer days were marred by those
Great thunderstorms of afternoon that jarred
The house and me, but not my mother.
She made her preparations where she could
And then withstood, reversing the glider cushions
Rolling back the rug, setting the plants in safety
On the floor, and when the first drops fell
She and I together shut the windows,
I, the windows on the second floor.

I remember how it was — hour by hour
The forces gathered in the west. The farm house
Waited stupified and hot for the storm
That rumbled black behind the orchard hill.
Mesmerized I stood outside. The maples
Knowing something I did not, held their
Tongues, brooding ominously. A chilling gust
Stirred them and me; lightning licked the sky;
Thunder snarled! I turned as raindrops hit.

The windows! Up the stairs I ran and down
The long dark hall, entering each room
To face the gaping storm, my little thunder
As I slammed each window shut, mocked
By the greater! There were seventeen windows —
With frantic curtains tangled at the screens.
I could shut the wetness out but not
The flash and thunder. Before, behind they played
With me and I with no place to hide, but still
I shut each window, then only I ran below
To feel the shelter of her confidence
That all was well. I put more faith in her
Than all the rods upon the roof! Within
The circle of her presence I was safe.

Without, the world was lashed with rain and fire,
And thunder rocked the house. At length the storm
Moved off beyond the eastern hills, and through
The opened kitchen door we saw a world
Refreshed. We breathed a rain-washed air.

Those storms and she are gone . . . I ponder how
No kind of storm broke in while mother lived!

—Marjorie A. Elliott

Aftermath of a June Hailstorm

Sorrowing I survey the damage of
June hail in my garden.

The iris, yesterday the glory of Camelot,
Purple, yellow chiffon, blue,
Now stripped of its banners and plumes,
Standing gaunt amid the stacked swords, defeated,
The green blades pointing skyward,
This one riven down the center vein.
All that color gone! A lone pistil,
Once arched beneath the inner rainbow sky,
Now exposed to the outer,
Naked of its triple canopies,
Bereft of the visor that hooded its gossamer gold.

There lie the lemon lilies,
Petals, perfume, gone.

And here the Oriental poppies flamed,
Imported fireballs, burning for a day,
All extinguished but these few
On tilted, broken stem.

The air breathes out the chlorophyll
Of tattered leaves above. Vandalized,
The trees let loose autumnal green
Upon the grass marbled with white.

Yet, as I grieve the stricken flowers,
The jagged leaf, I hear
The silent juices in the bough,
Feel the shaft of sun upon the burgeoning bud,
As Nature restores!

—Marjorie Atkins Elliott



Mrs. W.H. Atkins seated on the south lawn with her children, Howard, Billy and Marjorie. Circa 1920. (Atkins family)

A table blessing asked by W.H. Atkins

O God, our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for food, for friends, for loved ones. May we ever have grateful hearts for these Thy gifts. Amen.

Continuum

South Amherst is going through its greatest
upheaval since the forests were cleared;
the forms of livelihood change but
man still seeks an education
and most desire a church
in the community.

Some facets of an earlier rural community survive change. Vistas are there, though fewer; Mt. Norwottuck stands steadfast. Draft horses, the great barns, most cows have been replaced by a horse farm, roadside market gardening and a few flocks of sheep. Apple trees still decorate the hillsides in spring and South Amherst people find employment in the production and sale of fruit products. Preservation of woodlands, clean water, air, become vital concerns. (J.C. Hammond advised in 1921 that men drain their swamps!) More seek the long range view as population increases. Educational institutions have established their primacy; nor should we forget when a man's word was once his bond. The aim is to know and keep the best of this heritage and move on.



Watercolor of So. Amherst "Fiddler's Green for Christmas," by the late Roland of So. Amherst, So. Congregrational Church on the right. (S. Rainford)

Pastors of the South Congregational Church
Amherst, Massachusetts

Horace B. Chapin	1825-1829
Aaron Gates	1832-1837
Gideon Dana	1838-1840
Dana Goodsell	1841-1846
James L. Merrick	1849-1864
Walter Barton	1864-1866
George Lyman	1869-1873
F.B. Pullan (supply)	1875-1876
Charles S. Walker	1876-1879
H.B. Smith (supply)	
Martin Pasco (supply)	
Charles S. Walker	1881-1886
C.C. Bruce (supply)	1887-
Herbert W. Boyd	1888-1894
John F. Gleason	1895-1917
William H. Thurston	1918-1921
Archibald Kerr	1922-1926
Eben Francis	1927-1938
Leland Hunt	1939-1942
Louis Toppan	1942-1949
Arnold Kenseth	1949-

(List from Sheila Rainford)



Picture accompanied the following article by Mildred Dickinson in Amherst Record, 2/16/72.

This picture shows Dr. Charles S. and Mrs. Alice M. Walker, a well-known and well-liked couple of years ago, as they were often seen on the streets of Amherst. They built a home on Lincoln Avenue and lived there for many years.

Dr. Walker was born in Ohio, and he went to Marietta College and then studied for the ministry at Yale. He was pastor at a church in Darien, Connecticut, and while there met and married Mrs. Walker.

Dr. Walker was pastor of the South Amherst Church in 1878 for a year and then again was made pastor and lived in the South Amherst parsonage in 1881. While there, he studied at Amherst College under Professor Garman, and he received what is said to be the only Ph.D ever given at Amherst College.

In 1886, he accepted the position of college pastor and professor of political economy at Massachusetts Agricultural College.

In 1905 he became the Amherst correspondent for the Springfield Union. Dr. Charles Peters, who remembers Dr. Walker well, tells me, "When a news event occurred, Dr. Walker was off on his bicycle, and he got all the news and was very exacting in his reports."

Mrs. Walker was sister of Charles Morehouse of Carpenter and Morehouse publishers of the Amherst Record. She wrote several booklets on the local history and about its people.

Five of these booklets are: ***Ye Amherst Girl of Yet Olden Tyme, Early Days in the Connecticut Valley, The Story of a New England Country Church, Mary Mattoon and Her Hero of the Revolution, Through Turkey Pass to Amherst and Beyond.***



Chas. Walker's residence on Lincoln Ave. after he became professor of political economy at Mass. Agric. College in 1886. (House was first on Amity St. and moved around the corner to Lincoln and remodeled.) (Alice W. Walker)

CHURCH BEGAN 150 YEARS AGO

Amherst Bulletin, Nov. 19, 1975

By Alice H. Manning

The beautiful white church, facing the green in South Amherst has had a long and interesting history — a story of good deeds and cooperation among its members and its neighbors.

The South Congregational Church dates back to 1824, when in part to eliminate the distance traveled to the Second Congregational Church in East Amherst, "sixty legal voters met and associated themselves into a religious society by the name of "The South Congregational Society of the Town of Amherst." That name was maintained, with minor variations, until 1915 when the church was incorporated as "The South Congregational Church in Amherst."

Services were first held in Jonathan Warner's carpenter shop, situated immediately south of the new church property. At a legal meeting held at the south-east Middle school house in June 1824 ninety-three members of the society named a building committee including one Jonathan Bridgman, proprietor of the Bridgman Tavern on Bay Road. In August the society voted to accept the proposal of Capt. George Nutting and Philip L. Goss "to build a church edifice similar to one lately built in Greenwich, Mass." (The Greenwich church was razed when that settlement became part of Quabbin Resevoir in the 1930's).

According to contract, the builders agreed that, if the subscribers would supply the stone and deliver it to the site for the underpinnings and steps, they would erect the building for the sum of $3,300.

GIFT OF JONES LIBRARY

The Jones Library is now open five nights a week. It was named for Samuel Minot Jones, a principal benefactor, who left to the Town of Amherst $661,747, for a library, the Jones Library. This is from a biography by Dr. Charles S. Walker first a pastor in South Amherst, now a retired professor of Mental Science and Political Economy. Samuel Minot Jones was born in Enfield, Mass., now under Quabbin water, but left it at age three which was probably just as well, for according to Dr. Walker, "intemperance prevailed and immorality was common in back districts in those days." After a boyhood sojourn of fifteen years in Amherst, Samuel Minot Jones went to Chicago and there made a fortune in the lumber business. (W. L. Doran from "Light Reading," in *Amherst Journal Record.* c 1920's)



1884 picture of stately elm and house at 158 Shays Street (rented by Fred and Myra Morehouse from Charles Morehouse, father of Fred and Alice's brother, for $1.00 a week!). The younger Morehouses lived there until their Prospect St. house was built. L. to R.: Rev. Charles S. Walker; his wife, Alice (the writer), next to tree trunk; Fred & Myra Morehouse on porch; Claude & Charlie, sons of Rev. & Mrs. Walker. House now remodeled. Present owners: Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Trotman. (Alice W. Walker)

The Mountains

Behold our grand old mountains,
Like sentinels they stand,
To guard the peaceful valley
From foes on either hand.
With rugged peaks uplifted
Toward Heaven's eternal blue,
They stand like giant watchmen,
Faithful, and firm, and true.

Beneath the mountain's shadow,
The river lies at rest,
Reflecting like a mirror
Each battered rocky crest.
Though tempests wild may gather,
Above the clouds they rise,
And lift their towering heads aloft
To meet the angry skies.

For ages past these mountains
Have guarded all beneath,
Oft decked in robes of ermine,
Or crowned with victors' wreath.
Where once the Indian wandered
And wild beasts sought their prey,
We hear the hum of work shops
In thriving towns today.

But still unchanged, the mountains
In silent grandeur rise.
And lift their towering heads aloft,
Unheeding to the skies,
Fit emblems of the majesty
Of Him who reigns above,
Of everlasting watchfulness
And everlasting love.

—Alice M. Walker



Alice Morehouse Walker, probably in the dress made of black silk material given her by LB.S. friends when she and her husband, Rev. Charles, moved with two sons, Claude and Charles, to Mass. Agricultural College in 1886. She had been active in leading musical performances while at So. Congregational, in the two separate periods of her husband's ministry. Alice played an instrument, wrote poetry (two in this book), and later, a descriptive, valuable series of local history of Amherst. (Alice W. Walker)

RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH
"Raising Funds"

Mrs. Alice Walker was always stirring up an activity along musical lines, usually to swell the church treasury for needed repairs or for missions. One of her largest achievements, as the one behind the scene, was an outdoor lawn party held north of the church. Mr. John Morell offered his orchard adjoining the church as a site. Handbills were printed uptown and Geo. Cutler loaned unbleached cotton to enclose the grounds. A locomotive headlight was secured and fastened against the north side of the church. Lanterns were borrowed. Ice cream was engaged. Chairs were taken from the Sunday School room — others were brought from the parsonage as they were needed.

A committee of Henry Wales, Mrs. Strong, and the minister went to Belchertown to get Uncle Kentfield "to scare up an orchestra." The weather was good; the crowds came. Our orchestra was secured in Belchertown. It was a great success, and raised money, too. With it new carpeting and new cushions for the sanctuary were purchased in November 11, 1883. Alice, though tired, was again thrilled to have launched another group festivity at her husband's church in South Amherst.*(1)*

1. From Alice M. Walker's, "The Minister's Wife," 1905 (written 1930.)

RECORD OF 50 YEARS OF CHURCH MAINTENANCE

Penciled Notes from Diary of W.H. Atkins
Who Lived in Amherst from 1888 to 1952.
(First page missing)

Page 2

1895 Auditorium decorated and stained glass windows installed; furnaces replace stoves.
1905 Furnaces moved to cellar.
1912 Pipe organ dedicated.
1915 South Congregational Church incorporated.
1920 Timbers renewed in steeple, $765.00.
1920 New Weathervane.
1927 Auditorium redecorated, $600.50; Linoleum floor laid, $594.60.
1924 One Hundredth Anniversary celebrated.
1929 Horse sheds removed.
1934 Cellar enlarged; bank walls laid. Cellar drain and sewer line laid.
1937 Woman's Missionary Society united with Missionary Committee of the Ladies Benevolent Society.
1938 Sept. 21 - Hurricane damage: stained glass window blown in; two chimneys blown down, one of which crushed the roof.
1939 Money raised to repair hurricane damage.
1939 Revision of the bylaws. Furnaces renewed.

Page 3

1939 Acceptance of the gift of the South East Chapel by the South East Sunday School Association.
1939 Kitchen built from the dismantled chapel.
1942 Bridgman Memorial window blown in.
1943 Voted to mail the church calendars to the families not represented at church.
1943-1945 Monthly U.S. servicemen letters sent to all, both Protestant and Catholic.
Jan. 1943 Redecoration fund started by John Schoonmaker and W.H. Atkins - fifty dollars each.
1944 Redecoration Committee formed.
1946 Cosattec or Married Couples Club formed.
1946 Floor supports and steps rebuilt.
1947 Redecoration of auditorium: choir seats dropped to main floor level; Pyloris built in two east corners; organ covered new seat covers; stained glass windows removed; overall cost - $6,287.

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1949 Movie Picture Projector Association formed; two members of the following five organizations cooperating: Church, L.B.S., Grange, Thursday Club and Cosattec Club.
1949 Toilets installed in basement.





The Rev. J.F. Gleason, a much respected minister, 1895-1917. Pictured here with his wife at the parsonage, he gave an address July 4, 1895, at a patriotic church program, children taking part, ice cream served downstairs. (Mrs. Clifford Tiffany)

A full sermon is available on "Windows of Agate," giving more background of the donors of the stained-glass windows installed in 1895. (He had a sense of humor. Clara Dwight recalls he told a church group once, "Anyway, try to be here in time to see the late Stile." They attended from West Street. (Picture from Marian Hawthorne Lyman)

CONGREGATIONALISM FOR EDUCATION

"Noted from the beginning for its educated ministry, Congregationalists were pioneers in the development of the nation's free public schools and founded many of the nation's colleges and universities, including among others, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Amherst, Oberlin, Bowdoin, Fish, Howard, Dillard, Beloit, Knox, Carleton, Yankton, Pomona, Wellesley, Wheaton, and Smith." (General Council of the Congregational Church in Boston — 1st meeting.)

Home of Erastus Coy, (of late 19th Century), 228 Shays St., now owned by Geo. and Anne Landry. Mrs. Parnell Munson, Erastus' sister, was born in this house. Hill behind house was designated "Coy's Hill" until Professor Hitchcock renamed it "Castor." Coy was the first president of the reorganized So. Amherst Improvement Soc.; J.W. Dana, vice-president; C.S. Walker, secretary-treas. A bylaw change in 1879 permitted ladies to serve on the Amherst Society's executive committee; the precedent was set. Mrs. J.F. Morell was duly elected to serve on executive committee with Messrs. Munson and Bridgman. In the next four years, grading of the Common, seeding, three street lights, and trees were added. (No ball playing on Common except July 4th and Labor Day.) ***Carpenter and Morehouse,*** *pps. 410-414. (Elliott, 1984)*

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

at South Congregational Church
"Windows of Agate" - Gleason's Sermon of 1895
Amherst Record, 1973

"Windows of Agate" was the title of a sermon delivered in the South Congregational Church on Sunday, Dec. 22, 1895, by the Rev. John F. Gleason honoring the installation of 11 stained glass windows that are now in the Rev. Arnold Kenseth's barn.

The windows, removed in 1946 when the church was restored to its original Colonial simplicity, were recently offered to the Amherst Historical Commission and the Trustees of the Jones Library. Neither the Commission nor the Jones accepted the windows for lack of storage space or display area.

Mr. Kenseth said recently, "Nobody has given them much thought until now," He said that about a year ago trustees of the church were approached by a church in Worcester who wanted to use bits of broken glass to repair their own windows, but that otherwise the windows were almost forgotten.

Winifred Sayer, curator at the Jones Library, said she thought it "a shame that the windows might leave Amherst. If they're put up for sale," she said, "I don't care what the quality of the glass is, people will buy it whether it's good, bad or indifferent. Stained glass is so big these days."

Mr. Kenseth said that suggestions have been forwarded that the windows be broken down so medallions could be made from the pieces. He said no decision has been made yet as to what to do with them.

In his sermon 78 years ago Mr. Gleason said to the congregation, "It has long been your desire to rescue this room from its former severe simplicity. The Ladies' Benevolent Society, which for 27 years has been a powerful auxiliary to the church, was the active and efficient agent in this work . . . It has resulted in securing 11 memorial windows of great beauty, with harmony of design and diversity of color. These alterations have been made at a cost of one thousand dollars, and the bills have all been paid.

"The church should be comely," Mr. Gleason went on. "There is no virtue or reforming grace in bare walls. If your forefathers endured them for lack of means to adorn them, or because they desired to protest against doubtful saints and other distracting ornaments of the Roman Church, there is no need that we should allow the pendulum to swing as far in that direction and deprive God's house of all beauty."

Pedantically, Mr. Gleason concluded, "The mind is largely affected by its surroundings, and our education is shaped almost as much by what we see as by what we hear."

Mr. Gleason went on to describe each person for whom a memorial window had been donated.

• "MARCUS GOODELL: was born in Belchertown. He joined the South Amherst Church in 1839 when he was 30 years of age, although he dated his entrance upon a Christian life when 12 years old. He often spoke of the good prayer meetings that the boys used to hold under an apple tree back of the schoolhouse."

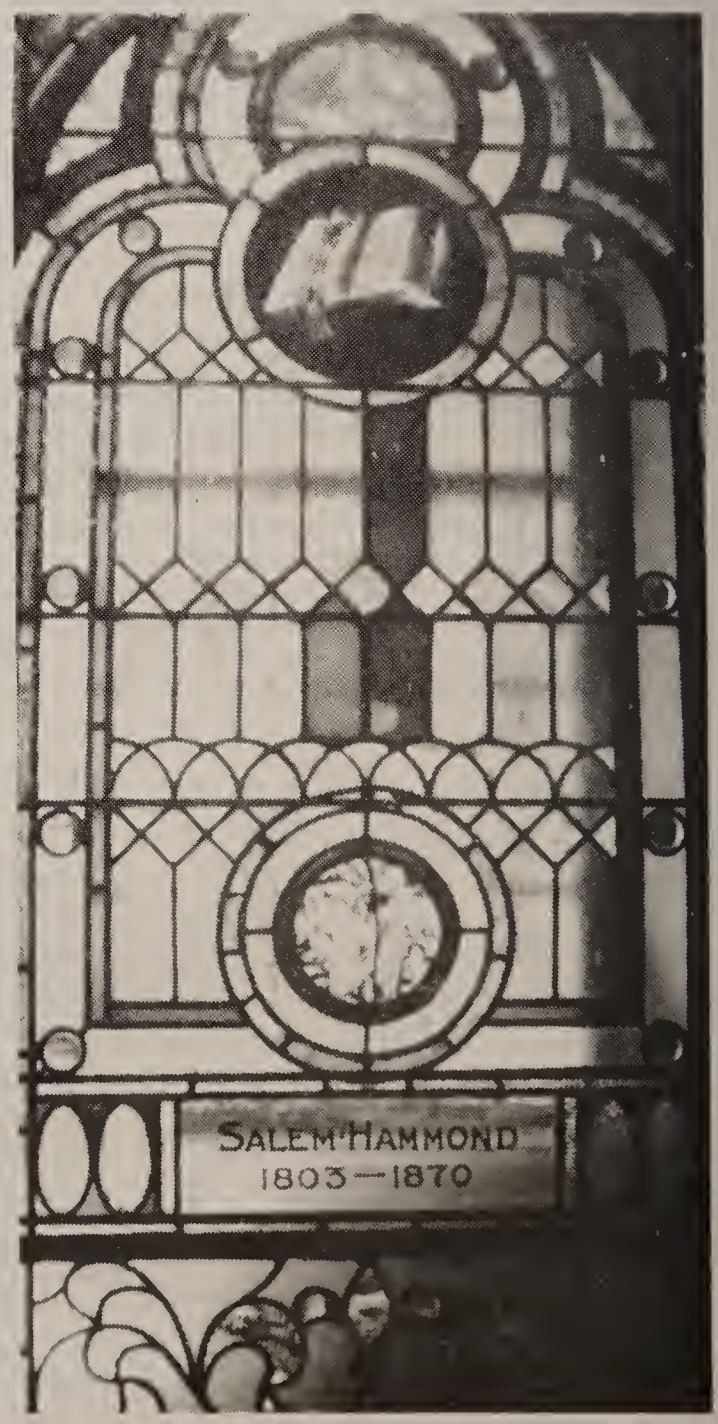
• JUDITH and GEORGE NUTTING: "It may be said of him that he was diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. He was never known to omit family worship but once and the pressure of circumstances then served to justify it." (Mr. Gleason doesn't mention what happened.)

• MR. and MRS. J.E. MERRICK. Of Merrick Mr. Gleason said, "He was of a cheerful disposition and a man of good judgement, whose advice was often sought in disputed matters, as well as in business affairs. He was a successful farmer and teacher."

• "SALEM HAMMOND was a man of more than ordinary clearness and vigor of thought. His advice was often sought in matters of interest to individuals or to the assessors of Amherst. He was diffident and retiring, distrustful of the value of his own opinion, and his temperament tended toward the melancholic."

Other windows were given in memory of Lorin Dickinson, Mrs. Asa Dickinson, Mrs. E.J. Williams, Richard and Mary Bridgman, and Mr. and Mrs. William Lyman. Two of the windows were donated by the Ladies' Benevolent Society and the Good Times Club, a club devoted to socials and literary discussion.

Mr. Kenseth speculated that the trustees may decide to do something special with the windows in connection with the church's 150th anniversary which comes up next year.



Something is lost when the name and face of a memorial are forgotten. Church's stained-glass windows, installed 1895, removed 1947, had suffered some breakage in subsequent 27 years of storage. This one, among those undamaged, given by sons of Salem Hammond, has three darker panes, replacement of those broken in the 1938 hurricane. (Sheila Rainford)



The Rev. Ebenezer and Clarissa Francis, loyal workers "at peace with life." So. Amherst, 1927-1938. (Boltwood Room, Jones Library)



A group observing Christian Week (c. 1929) at Northfield, Mass. Back Row: Gretchen Machmer, Amherst; Harold Wentworth, Mabel Whiting, Mary Allis, So. Amherst; Ruth Pushee, N. Amherst; Grandma (Mrs. E.H.) Wentworth, Earl Allis, Archie French, So. Amherst; Back Row: Bob Schoonmaker, Es Schoonmaker. So. Amherst; Doris Redman, Amherst; Dorothy Lyman, Lota Whiting, Charlotte Miller, So. Amherst. (Lota Whiting Welcome, 1973)



A little club on West St. called themselves the "Jolly Dozen." They met every month or so in 1920's. This picture taken at the home of Mrs. Nettie Richards. Front: Mrs. Buxton (glasses); next three: Mrs. Nettie Richards, Mrs. Carrie Hayward (in sweater) and Mrs. Inez Parker (in striped skirt); Next three: Mary Thorpe, _____ Prentice (in black) and smiling, Mrs. ("Cousin") Emma Sanderson; next five: Mrs. Ida Shumway, Mrs. Ernestine Slaney, (Inez Parker's aunt) Lucy (Darling) Stiles, Mrs. W.H. Smith, and Mrs. Inez Swan. Sometimes Mrs. Archibald Kerr, Mildred McKemmie and Mrs. Phyllis Simmons were present. (Paul Thorpe)



A Sunday school class gets together from the So. Congregational Church. l. to r., Back Row: Mary Hosford, Rachel Cowles, Barbara Sauer and Jennie Jauhola. Seated: Mildred Cook, Thyrza Barton and Doris Cowles, 1928. (Atkins' ice house in background, now gone.) (Elliott, 1930)



The lovely former home of Alice Wentworth Owen, granddaughter of the E.H. Wentworths, now the home of Miner W. Tuttle on upper So. East St. (Alice W. Owen, c 1920)

SOUTH AMHERST CHURCH HARD HIT IN HURRICANE

Congregation Faces Necessity of Raising
Funds for Repairs of Edifice
April 1, 1939, W.H. Atkins

One of the heaviest losses in the hurricane which visited this town in September of last year was the South Amherst church. Little has been said about it, but now that the damage has been repaired, that church finds itself faced with the problem of getting funds to take care of the debt incurred and incidentally to do some much needed improvements that were already under discussion before the big wind brought its unexpected burden. Amherst's churches suffered little from wind damage, if one takes into account that the town supports a dozen different church edifices.

South Amherst, however, lost two of the memorial windows installed in 1895, two chimneys and considerable roof damage from falling bricks. The window casings gave way. They were secured with old-fashioned square iron nails, and the constant drag from the wind gusts pulled the nails from their sockets, releasing the entire plate of glass to fall in many pieces on the floor. It is rare that a memorial window must be replaced so it excites some interest as to what is done in case the family of those who were memorialized have gone from the scene.

One of the windows at South Amherst was just such a case. All of the stained glass windows were installed at the same time, almost 50 years ago, in 1895, presumably as the result of a campaign for such decoration. The one which suffered the greatest destruction was placed in memory of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Lyman,(1) a branch of the Lyman family which has long since departed from the community. An offer of a substantial gift from Miss Florence Hayward toward a window in memory of two members of her family has replaced the Lyman window. The other one, although badly broken, did retain the section where George and Judith Nutting, both born 1786, were or are memorialized and workmen were able to rebuilt the rest of the plate. George died in 1838, Judith in 1883.(2)

This has cost the South Amherst church a considerable sum of money. Rebuilding chimneys is an expensive art, as those who had them tumbled in the September hurricane well know. And the damage done to the roof of the church by the falling bricks was also a costly proposition. It must all be paid for and numerous ways of raising money have been proposed. Definitely arranged is the plan for a memorial service, early in May, whereby dollar memorials are contributed by those who love the church or community for one reason or another, and wish to give in memory of persons, places or work done in the past or the present.

This type of money raising plan was used with great success at the Belchertown Congregational church two years ago at its decennial anniversary. Suitable recognition of those memorial gifts is made in a public place. Much more lasting and effectual than a program of entertainment which is over and forgotten in a few hours, although South Amherst may find it necessary to plan something in that manner for those who prefer to give their contribution that way.

The South Amherst church was organized in 1824, with letters from the First church at the center, the Second church, and the congregations of Belchertown and Granby, all of whom were members in good standing at home, but had moved to the southernmost section of the town to partake in the farming or other industry and found it difficult to travel so far for Sunday morning and week day worship. The south parish was formed for their benefit. The present building was dedicated in November of 1825 at a cost of $3,300 after the subscribers had "drawn the hewn stone for the underpinning" and "banked up" around the building and "fenced it in."

It is important that the old churches be kept in repair and in use. They tell the story of the early New England struggle for life and recognition more effectually than any other historical item, with the possible exception, perhaps, of the church burying ground which inevitably lies nearby. The South Amherst cemetery is beautifully located, well kept and contains more names of historical interest.

1. Across So. East St. on side of Mt. Pollux, northwest of the Hammond-Atkins homesite.

2. George and Judith Nutting had seven daughters. Lived 1½ miles south of church, So. East Street. George was builder of this church at age 38 in 1824.

HURRICANE DEBT LIFTED FROM SOUTH CHURCH

South Amherst, May 8, 1939. — The "Hurricane Debt" was lifted from the South Congregational church last night. The response to the appeal for help from the church building was very general and generous. The committee, Fred C. Adams, Miss Minnie L. Dana, Mrs. W.H. Sanderson and W.H. Atkins, tried to contact everyone possible who had ever been connected with this church, and some took this opportunity to memorialize friends who had been in other churches. The lighting of the memorial candles made a very impressive service as the light increased from dimness to brilliance, symbolizing the effect of so many lives having been lived for God.



Chas. Stiles' homestead, 861 West St., after the 1938 hurricane. Stuart Stiles saw the shade trees falling as he entered dooryard; helped his father prop up the doors of the wagon shed with planks. As the men hurried to the barn, a plank sailed over their heads and landed. The power was off two weeks. Like other dairymen, they milked cows (thirty) by hand, twice a day for two weeks. (Stuart Stiles)



One of So. Amherst' nine 175 yr. old brick houses. The Stiles' owned house (Truman Coe's) was gutted by the 1938 hurricane; half of roof was carried off. Building was remodeled. Prof. Andrew Salkey lives in this now Hampshire College house. (Stuart Stiles)

South Church Plans To Redecorate Sanctuary
1947

Final plans for the restoration and redecoration of the South Congregational Church sanctuary were adopted at a meeting of the Redecoration Committee held on Thursday night. These plans are based on a return to the simplicity, light and dignity of the New England meeting house. The building program includes restoration of the former style of clear glass windows, and a new simplified treatment of the organ case. Other features of the undertaking will minimize the unfortunate proportions of the sanctuary which were introduced over a hundred years ago when the building was changed from one to two stories.

Work will be started April first with the hopes that the sanctuary will be ready for use by the middle of May.



The Toppan 50th Wedding Anniversary, fall 1985. Back row: l. to r. Beverly, her father, "Toppie" (minister); Middle row: Dorrie, Mrs. Adra Toppan, Carolyn; Peter sitting, born after the family left So. Amherst. Friends from earlier pastorates, including many from So. Amherst, were present. "Toppie" was pastor at time of 1947 church restoration, and Cossatec Club. (Richard Stedman)

The personnel of the Redecorating Committee is as follows: John W. Schoonmaker, chairman, W. H. Atkins, secretary, Mrs. Henry Stoughton, F. B. Lyman, Miss Lena Pomeroy, Arthur Towson, Norman G. MacLeod, Philip Ives, Barbara Tiffany, Truman Smith, Mrs. Archer French, Mrs. Mathias Berglund, and Louis C. Toppan.

Others on the Business and Financing Committees are: Howard Atkins, Mrs. F. B. Lyman, Herbert McChesney, and Harold Wentworth.

The architectural advisor is Winthrop Judkins. The entire building and redecorating project will be carried out by Wesley Wentworth.



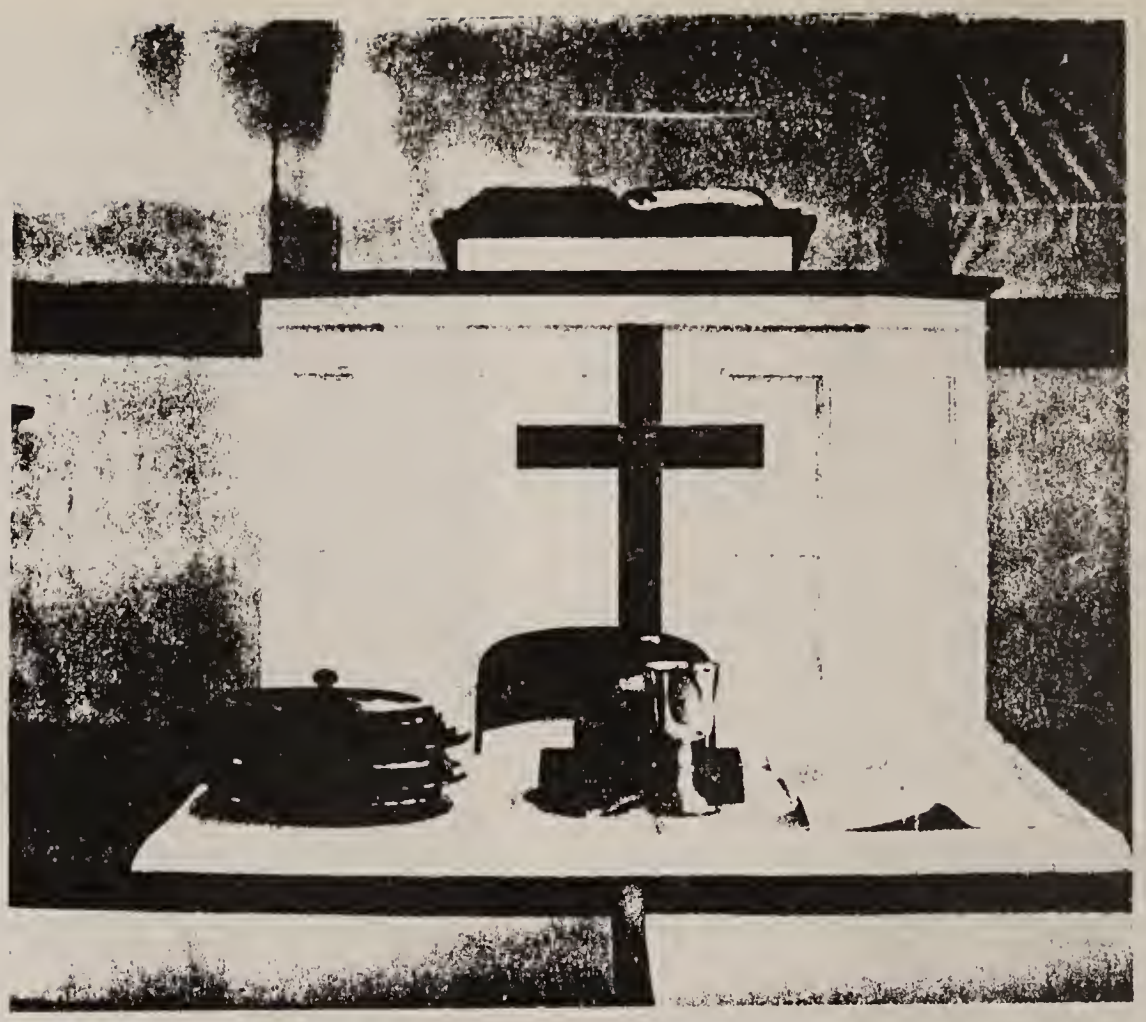
Loomis Merrick's woods, primeval pines. Merrick said, "I would rather have a tree as a memorial than a marble slab." They were cut down after he died. (R. Whitcomb, © 1910)

PERSONAL MESSAGE ADDS TO CHRISTMAS CARD
December 15, 1950
W.H. Atkins

As we sit at the desk and read over the list of names to which Christmas cards were sent last year with the new names added this year, we wonder where to draw the line on Christmas card greetings. Our thought turns first to those who are in especial need of word of hope and cheer, the "shut-ins" and those likely to be forgotten, those suffering from the throes of war. We want also to keep in touch with our past acquaintances even if but once a year and then there are the special friends whose names give us a sense of intimacy that is good to feel. Also our good neighbors, perhaps of more value than all others, must not be forgotten. And so we come to the end of the list, while the pencil of red lead is idly held in the hand.

Perhaps there is no way in which friendship can be carried to another more readily at this season of the year than by mailing the Christmas card. There has never been a year when the expression of friendship was more needed, especially by those fathers and mothers at home, as well as by the boys at the front who are suffering the pain, anguish and agony of war.

Another thought, if the Christmas friendship card is worth sending, it is worthy of your name personally written and not printed. To add a message, however short, increases its value one hundred fold. Let every Christmas card carry a personal message to mankind of the friendship, the love, and the eternal hope to which Christmas is dedicated.



The new pulpit for the So. Congregational Church, Amherst, MA, constructed as part of the restoration in 1947. Louis Toppan, pastor. McChesney letter gives details on this one part of project. (Picture from news release)

905 Center St.
Ludlow Mass. 01056
September 6, 1974

Dear Arnold,

. . . as to the matter of the pulpit, about which I promised you the story. The time it was made was when the church was redecorated, the stained glass windows taken out, and the colonial atmosphere brought back to replace the sometime Victorian mishmash that the church had been converted to some time previously. You probably know the date of all this, but unfortunately this escapes me. At any rate, during a coffee klatch one evening at parsonage, when Toppie, Win Judkins, the architect and prime mover in the restoration, and I and some others, were discussing the project, the problem of replacing the pulpit came up. Jud expressed ideas about the design of a new pulpit, which would be in keeping with the newly restored sanctuary, and as he talked my memory gave me a nudge as I remembered some paneling that was in Charles Miller's attic - paneling which had been in their house in Quincy, Mass. As usual, I had to make the mistake of volunteering my services, and the upshot of all this discussion was that the paneling was just right, and if only someone would take on the job of building one of Jud's designs well, you know who ended up offering. Young (then), Bob Garrabrants offered to help me, and we started to make the pulpit over at the Cold Storage Plant on West St., now a shopping center of some kind, but which then belonged to Wes Wentworth. Wes had a power saw, and planer, and plenty of room. So, Bob and I with only our enthusiasm to keep us warm. because I recollect it was cold weather when we were working there, began, and by dint of much evening and Saturday work, finished the pulpit just in time for the dedication of the Sanctuary. In fact, we painted the pulpit and stained the top the night before, and told Toppie to keep his hands off the top or he would be like the tar baby of Uncle Remus. That's the first time I ever saw a sermon preached, "no hands". Our timing was so good (or poor), that we didn't have time to build a back to the pulpit, and for some years the back was a gaping hole. What is most unusual about the pulpit is that it is built to fit Toppie, as the minister at the time. We took his dimensions and built the height, width, etc., to fit his torso and style. The only time I have heard of a pulpit being built to fit a minister.

That's about all of the story, and I am not looking for any recognition in this at all. I get enough enjoyment out of seeing the pulpit when we make our infrequent visits to South Amherst, but I do feel, particularly since I have been involved with the history of our town, that all these little human interest angles of historical buildings should be documented. So, that is what I have done here.

I do hope you will let us know when the celebration will take place, I believe you said in October? We would like to come if at all possible. Oh, yes, one other little detail — when we painted the pulpit on the Saturday night before the dedication, we realized that we would not be able to move it with wet paint, so we moved it to its place in the church, and painted it there, using plenty of newspapers to ensure that traces of our work would not be around the next morning. Best of luck in your celebration planning.

Sincerely.

Herb McChesney

Letter to Rev. Arnold Kenseth
So. Congregational Church, Amherst, Mass.



Class at Bible School — held outdoors sometime during 1958-1960. L. to R.: Arnold Kenseth, standing; Front row: Judy Moore, Arthur Dimock; Back row: Richard Ives, Linda Cook, Elaine Kenseth. (Sheila Rainford)



A "silver tea" for the L.B.S., Feb. 22, 1959, in the Atkins' room of the So. Congregational Church. L. to R.: Dorothy Ives, Kathleen King Hayes, (author of the skit, "Our Silver Tea Traditions," put on by the group), Ritzuko Wardwell and Ruth Atkins. Antiques were loaned. (Sheila Rainford)



So. Congregational Church, new 1973 parlor, used for wedding receptions, small group meetings, decorated by Sanfford "Sandy" Poole, once of So. Amherst. (Heath, 1984)

Norman Myrick To Lecture
On "The Atom At The Crossroads"
Amherst Journal Record
Dec. 12, 1946

Norman Myrick, a former Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, will lecture on "The Atom at the Crossroads" in the Jones Library Auditorium at five o'clock next Sunday afternoon, Mr. Myrick is a native of Longmeadow, a graduate of the Technical High School in Springfield and MSC, with a Master's degree in history from Amherst College. Before going into the Service in January, 1943, he had been teacher of history and social science in the Amherst High School. He is new College Editor at MSC.

In Mr. Myrick's lecture, which will be illustrated with pictures of the Bikini test, he will tell something about his experiences with the Mid-Pacific expedition, but more especially about the larger story of Atomic energy, the Baruch report, the problem of control and the future of mankind.

VIETNAM PEACE VIGIL
Amherst Record 9/23/73

Over the weekend, a group of citizens began gathering signatures on a petition which would ask Town Meeting to "vote to have a permanent, small and unobtrusive marker or memorial to be placed on the Town Common to commemorate the Amherst Peace Vigil of 4 December 1966 to 19 August 1973. Costs of the marker or memorial will be met by voluntary public subscription."



The wedding of Eulalia and Robert Collins at their home, 1120 So. East St. by Rev. Osmond Billings. Jane Ostrander to the far right; Mrs. Rena Billings beside her husband. The ceremony was performed indoors. (Robert Collins)

WEATHER VANES

Amherst Record January 4, 1952
by W. H. Atkins

The weather vanes of South Amherst were well depicted in an article written by Robert Francis in 1943, while he was living in South Amherst. He comments, "The weather vanes of this community include a cow, a sheep, a prancing horse, a man with a hen, a white swan, a fish, an eagle and a seahorse. So far as I know, they do not include that most traditional of all weather vanes, the rooster. Two months ago I could not have named a single animal in the whole menagerie. The only weather vane I knew was the golden arrow on the steeple of the white church."

The first known professional vane manufacturer in New England was a Bostonian, Deacon Shem Drowne. His Faneuil Hall grasshopper, which has looked down on Boston's busy life ever since it was placed there in 1749, is the most famous vane in the country. "In spite of the fact that it has suffered several accidents, it still looks as if it could jump with the best of its kind. In the earthquake of 1755, the grasshopper lost one leg which was restored by Deacon Drowne's son and in 1761 it went through the fire without injury." After more than a hundred winds, it lost its horns and two front feet. These were later replaced and in 1899 it had its tongue spliced and a patch on the body plus a new coat of gold leaf.

In **Hobbies** we read that "ever since churches were built, the cockerel has been recognized as a steeple vane, it being a symbol of watchfulness, a reminder of the crowing that awakened Peter's conscience the night he thrice denied his Lord." The Hadley Congregational Church has a vane of this type. Mrs. Clifton Johnson of Hockanum Road, Hadley, assembled the following information. "It is believed that the cock on the present church building on West Street, Hadley in 1753 and in 1808 transferred to the new church building on the same site. When this church was moved to its present location in 1841 the rooster came along with it. We doubt if the Hadley rooster is the size of the one which Drowne made five feet in height for a church in Boston which became known as the Cockerel Church or the Church of the Holy Rooster. This vane had various experiences due to war and fire until in 1873 it was erected upon the Congregational Church in Cambridge. In 1939 it was taken down and regilded and is now back on its perch, one of the oldest vanes in America."

We are pleased that the Hadley Church people followed the old tradition connected with the cock as a church weather vane and stationed one atop their church steeple.

We do not know the weather vane model that was on the South Amherst Church during its first 100 years, from 1824, which was blown from its standard in 1920. We do know it was so badly damaged by age and disaster that it could not be repaired and that a new one, the design of an arrow, was substituted. We wish it might have been the rooster to follow along that of the Hadley mother church in the historic fame of the cock as a church weather vane. If, as has been quoted, the cock stands for watchfulness and the awakening of the conscience of man, it were well if one graced the top of every church of the land. . . .

The weather vane points to the direction from which the wind comes. We read into the weather vane's directing finger the kind of weather that is likely to arrive. We know that out of the southwest come the intermittent showers, out of the southeast, the twelve-hour rain. The northeast is that cold rainy quarter. Out of the northwest come the cold crisp days of the winter and the cooling streams of air for the summer season. . . .
All honor to the one who first conceived of the weather vane idea, for either utility or decorative purpose.



HADLEY FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH REGILDS WEATHERVANE

News Release out of Hadley
August 13, 1969

The biggest problem to date of the Hadley First Congregational Church, has been started; the outside of the church is being painted. It has been 11 years since the last paint job was done. George Lawler of Northampton, a retired steeplejack, has donated his services to the general painting contractor and to the church, and has helped them obtain professional steeplejacks. . . .

He is acting in an advisory capacity. He said that he was fortunate to obtain the services of Alfred Venne and Jack Wright who have worked with steeples in the past. Lawler had worked on this church steeple in the past and recalls particularly removing the weathercock after the hurricane of 1938 when it was blown sideways by the strong winds. It has once again been taken down, this time to receive a new coat of gold leaf.

The copper weathercock has withstood wind, rain, cold, heat and man. He has been shot four times and stolen once. The rooster has a history of 217 years in Hadley, and came originally from England in 1752. It was placed on its present perch in 1808. He is 33 inches wide from beak to tail feathers, and 32 inches long from cock to spurs. Mrs. Norman Ritter of Hockanum, Trustee of the First Congregational Church, has taken a tracing of the weathercock, and will lend it to others who might care to use it.

Ives honored for 29 years service at South Congregational Church

By Polly de Sherbinin
Special to The Record
April 30, 1980

"Only in South Amherst," said one person at the end of the festive banquet held for Phil Ives on Friday evening on the occasion of his retirement after 29 years as clerk of South Congregational Church. The finest wit, wisdom and warmi-heartedness of that cosiderable church community was in evidence that evening in appreciation of Phil's services and of Phil himself.

The entire occasion was skillfully MC'd by George Sulzner. First testimony was delivered by Alan Rainford in the absence of his wife, Sheila, who was ill. She has assumed the role of the first new church clerk in almost three decades. Her proclamation honored attending church regularly regardless of weather, "because, above all others, Phil knows what the weather will be." Over the years, Ives has kept painstaking records of local temperature and precipitation which he has shared with the community in the pages of the Amherst Record.

Ruth Atkins read a letter from Marjorie Atkins Elliott of Wisconsia, well known as the author of "Leave the Lamp Burning," her reminsiciences of growing up in South Amherst. She recalled in the letter sent for Friday's occasion that Ives was born in the house in which he lives with his wife, Dorothy, on West Street. The Ives' have four children and a number of progeny attended the supper.

Ruth Atkins pointed out that Ives has always lived in South Amherst except for a time in California, and that he is internationally known for his fruit fly studies. He received his doctorate at Cal Tech.

Harold Plough, professor emeritus of biology at Amherst College, spoke as Phil Ives' teacher there. He said, "It is pretty rare to have a former teacher bring greetings at Phil's age, although you're still young, Phil." Ives is now retired. Plough said he got Ives started, and would like to take credit for all he has accomplished. Ives' career has been in genetic research at Amherst College.

Charles Fawkner of Shays St. spoke as "the first church moderator Phil broke in." He thanked Ives for calming him down in times of duress. Then Bradlee Gage admitted wondering how to handle the job when it came his turn to serve as moderator. "Don't worry, Phil will take care of you," he recalls being told.

Dick Warner stepped forward with a mysterious round tupperware bowl which he opened with some ceremony and brought forth a smaller plastic container. Offering it to the man of the hour with something of a flourish, he said, "There's nothing more discouraging to a winter without snow." Then it was clear. The container was filled with that elusive white substance "that used to fall here in the wintertime."

Roy Heath offered a framed color enlargement of a photo he had taken of the church.

Elliott Barker and Eleanor Singleton, both church trustees, stepped forward with free passes for Phil and Dorothy Ives to the church's justifiably famous annual chicken and strawberry supper, including "a double helping of strawberries."

Then it was Cecil Currin's turn to present a thermometer which he explained was designed to prevent suffering from extremes of temperature.It registers only temperatures between 40 and 80 degrees fahrenheit.

After it, came the "Philip T. Ives Weathervane," with handsome crowing cock to be placed on top of the parish house behind the church. Everett Dimock then presented a check for $600 from church members to establish the "Philip T. Ives concert fund."

Arnold Kenseth, pastor, said that during his first 15 years as minister there, he received at least two letters a week from Ives. Together with Ives' support, Kenseth said, came the good grace never to remind him later of the advice that had been proffered.

And finally, Phil Ives had his chance to speak. "If I'd known retiring would make an occasion like this," he said, "I would have retired five years ago."



A wonderful evening of celebration; dinner served downstairs in the church. L. to R.: Phil Ives, Geo. Sulzner, Mrs. Dorothy Ives, Harold Plough, Mrs. Betty Kenseth and Everett Dimock, standing. (Mrs. Everett Dimock)

STEEPLE WORK TOPS OFF REPAIR AT SOUTH CHURCH

Daily Hampshire Gazette
Sept. 1, 1984
By Meredith Carlson

AMHERST — Dave Allen is always climbing to the top of his profession — sometimes 125 feet. Suspended by a rope, he slowly swings around spires affixed to churches.

As a steeplejack, Allen climbs up more than 100 feet of ladder steps to get to work. He is currently fixing the steeple on the South Congregational Church (South Amherst), which is in its last phase of a three-year renovation project. The steeple has not been fixed in 60 years and the base was in such shaky shape, Allen and others had to build something to hold it up, while they hammered and nailed it back together, said John M. Corbett Jr. who owns Landmark Rigging Inc. that has contracted to repair the steeple for $17,650. The roof of the bell carriage which is now replaced, was rotted and the pigeon droppings were so thick Allen thought they were what was holding it together.

Fixing steeples is not like other construction work — you cannot take your steps for granted. Allen said he has to make sure his feet are always planted when he works on the edge of the bell carriage. "Yeah, I get scared," said Allen looking over the 110-foot high balcony. When he is suspended in the air around the spire, the steeple often moves. He said his heart "jumps every time it happens." In his three years on the job, Allen has worked at heights of 125 feet. "Sometimes I don't like to know how high I am," he said with a smile. "The scariest part is replacing the weathervane."

In spite of all the fears, Allen likes the height because of the view. "I can see everything from up here," he said looking over the Holyoke Range. He also enjoys the wide range of skills involved in fixing steeples, such as masonry, carpentry, metal work and gilding. "Instead of just doing roofing or doing a trim on a house, you are working with more varied material," he explained.



Sheila Rainford, Bay Road. She was invaluable in sending photographs and articles for this book. (S. Rainford)



So. Congregational Church during tne repairs of the beltry. (Hampshire Gazette)

While Allen was up there with his rope gear, Sheila Rainford grabbed her camera and nerve, and climbed up, up into the belfrey where the big bell hangs. Its dulcet tones have rung over the valley 160 years — in the old days telling the age of one who had died; until recent times, calling for help for a fire as when Rose's blacksmith shop burned. Every Sunday it calls us to worship. Once there I would believe she first took the picture of the Mt. Holyoke Range, purposely missing the irreversible gash where man obtained stone for road building. Then she took a picture of the genuine Paul Revere bell; only a few score of them are left in New England.

We are grateful for her pictures and her courage, and the breaking of her day's routine to take them.

(M. Elliott)



Mt. Norwottock from the steeple of So. Congregational Church. (Photo by Sheila Rainford)

'RECREATION' GOT STARTED IN 1850'S

Amherst Record
(circa 1976)

The beginnings of organized recreation in Amherst can be traced back to the 1850's when the town was first exposed to organized sport when Amherst College began requiring physical exercise.

In 1911 Massachusetts Agriculture College conducted what is believed to be the first summer playground in Amherst on its campus, for 86 children.

The following year the school board allowed use of land adjoining the East Street School for a playground.

The first park commissioners were appointed in 1918. George F. Hobart, William H. Atkins and Cady R. Elder were responsible for any park land and the town commons.

In 1925, the commission accepted the first gift from J. Howard Sweetser. Sweetser Park remains today as part of the overall Boltwood Walk Project and will remain intact during the development stages with some improvements planned.

In 1934 Ulysses G. Groff presented 14 acres of the Mill Valley as a site for picnic grounds.



House on West Pomeroy Lane, of Ulysses Groff, dairy farmer of So. Amherst who gave land for a public park, at Fort River, 14 acres in 1934. (H. McChesney, 1972)

The first Playground Committee was actually the Board of Selectmen, F. Orville Pray, William H. Atkins and John R. Lannon. They made the recommendations to purchase the Elder and Pratt properties on Triangle Street which was accomplished in 1939.

The 1940 Town Meeting appointed Stephen Puffer, L. Leland Dudley, and Curry Hicks as the Playground Committee for construction of the Triangle Street Playground. The first paid recreation supervisor was George Williams, in 1942. The original three acres of developed land on what is now Community Field was expanded to its present size in 1946.

In 1948 a committee made up of Mrs. Albert Bergeron, Benton P. Cummings, Eugene Wilson, Minar Markuson, Lawrence V. Loy, Ruth McIntyre, and William G. Vinal recommended more play centers, fields, programs, a swimming pool and a town forest. It also suggested a Recreation Commission.

The first commission consisted of Clarence A. Jewett, William C. Atkins, Emory E. Grayson, William F. Case and Lawrence V. Loy. The first budget was $4,500.

During the early 1950's the commission continued to expand program offerings such as baseball and softball leagues, a teenage canteen and ice skating in addition to the summer playground program. It also planned construction of a new swimming pool.

Numerous donations to a swimming pool fund resulted in the opening of War Memorial Pool in 1956. Stanley P. Ziomek was employed first as maintenance supervisor and later the first full-time supervisor of recreation, a position he held until his move to the Department of Public Works in 1957.

The maintenancee functions related to recreation and parks at this time became a regular function of the DPW and Charles Abramson was to become the part-time supervisor of recreation.

Steady improvements in both facilities and program offering continued on through the sixties. The first full-time director of recreation, Dawn Bressie, was hired in 1968. She was followed by Robert Nowlan in 1970 with the current director, Russ Bardwell, assuming duties in 1972.

The Commission opened the Mill River Recreation Area in North Amherst in 1974. . . .

A master plan currently being developed will aid the commission in deciding future direction in terms of future new and improvements to existing facilities.



So. East Street entrance to Mt. Pollux conservation area, a scenic hilltop, established in 1984. (Ev. Dimock)

KESTREL TRUST

The Kestrel Trust is a non-profit conservation organization established in 1970 to provide a channel for private resources to help the community fulfill its needs and desires for natural open space. Its purpose is "the acquisition, preservation, management and improvement of natural areas, parklands and informal recreation sites for the advantage of man and the plants and animals therein."

. . .

Major accomplishments of the Trust have included acquisition by gift and by purchase of land in Hadley as part of Podick Conservation Area and contributions toward town purchase of Amethyst Brook, Eastman Brook, Harkness Brook, Larch Hill North and Plum Brook. The trust has also contributed to the development of a wildlife pond at Larch Hill North, to the furnishing of the Carriage House at Larch Hill and to improvements to various conservation areas through construction of fences, bridges, gates, benches, picnic tables and signs.

GLIMPSES OF THE ATKINS FRUIT FARM, PAST AND PRESENT



William H. Atkins, at age 66, with son, Bill rides a sled load of logs cut in the Atkins' woods, and pulled by the team, on a late day in December, 1937. (Mabel Miller Dwinell)



What's the next step? W.H. Atkins and son, Howard, weigh a farm problem, a big one but not as hopeless as the tear Howard tries to close over his right knee with a safety pin! (Late 1940's - Atkins or Miller)

AMHERST ANTICIPATES APPLE-BLOSSOM TIME

30,000 Trees in Southern Part of Town
Will be in Bloom Soon
Springfield Republican, May 6, 1933

Amherst, May 6, 1933. With the apple blossom season near at hand, the South Amherst fruit orchards, where 30,000 trees will be in bloom at the same time, draw one's attention and will undoubtedly attract hundreds of visitors as they do every year. A review of the apple industry in that section, written, and read by William H. Atkins, one of the pioneers in the local industry, at a recent meeting of the Grange, reveals items of local interest.

"Forty years ago," he said, "the principal farm industry was dairying, with the sale of cream as the money crop, and the fattening of calves and pork as side lines. Every farmer raised some potatoes and most of the corn for feeding his stock, and had a small flock of hens. Today we have less than half the cows, no fat calves or pork, less than half the potatoes, and almost no corn except for silage. But there is more than four times the poultry and 50 times the fruit."

When Mr. Atkins came to South Amherst in 1887, the orchard just north of the house which his father had bought, and which is now the Atkins homestead, contained about 100 trees and was considered the big orchard of the village. It yielded a commercial crop of 300 bushels. As far as can be learned, the orchard was set out about 1850 by the father of the late Lawyer John C. Hammond. The place had changed hands from time to time and the trees were badly neglected. After the elder Mr. Atkins bought the farm he at once began to regraft and replace the neglected trees.



An old Salem Hammond Greening tree of 1850, according to Bill Atkins, still survives in 1985 - north of Atkins house, south of Miller's, near gas pump of the 1930's. In spite of a huge cavity, the tree blooms each spring. An 1850 Russet apple tree is at N.E. corner of Miller's; a later Wealthy at Northwest. Geo. Atkins, 1888, set out Mac's. (Barbara Tiffany, 1985)



Scene around 1915 from Herbert Hutchings' hill looking west, showing some of the Range. A young orchard, possibly set out during the "apple fever," is on left side of a private cross lane; the orchard on right may be Gray's (Schoonmaker place) of Middle St. Ted Critchett's, (Moriarty's buildings, now Buczala's,) are on Bay Road.

Dirt road ran from between Cecil Jewett's and Hutchings to Middle St.; envisioned as part of her proposed "Needham Road" to West Street by Gertrude Bridgman in paper read Aug. 17, 1921 after Hammond's presentation. (Lyman Thomson)

The first planting of the now popular MacIntosh was on the Atkins farm in 1889. They were also the first to set out any number of Wealthy, Dutchess and Fameuse trees. These plantings enlarged the home orchard and in 1902 they started the orchard on the hill opposite the homestead.

"To those of us who can look back to the days when apple raising was merely a side line, the apple business in South Amherst is of especial interest," Mr. Atkins said. "Each household had a few, while some had quite a number of trees from which they obtained their fruit for home use. Any surplus was sold to a shipping agent. A jobbing house usually employed a local agent and furnished the capital. Apples were packed into old flour barrels, and it was not until the 90's that I ever saw them packed in new barrels.

"South Amherst farmers were sometimes able to fill four or five cars of apples, usually bought in lots of 10, 25, 50 and, more rarely, 100 barrels. There was always the question of grade, especially if the apple market dropped in price before the apples were shipped, for then the buyer was looking for some excuse to reject them. It was not unusual to see a farmer draw back home apples which the shipper had rejected for one reason or another. I can remember one lot that was rejected because the apples had been packed in unwashed flour barrels."



The hooper, maker of barrels.

There had been a great change in the commercial varieties, according to Mr. Atkins. He says the Baldwin alone has retained its position as the leading winter variety, while many well-known varieties have been discarded. The Early Harvest, for instance, a yellow apple popular prior to the advent of the Red Astrachan; the Seek-no-further, Hubbardstron, Nonesuch. Hulburt Stripe and Twenty Ounce have been supplanted by the Dutchess, the Wealthy and the MacIntosh. The Red Astrachan and the Gravenstein still stay in the field.

The first orchard of any size to be set following the Atkins activity was on the old Bridgman Tavern place, in 1895, by Myron Graves. In 1907 this orchard was leased to the State Agricultural college, as an experimental and demonstration tract. This leasing of the Graves orchard, Mr. Atkins states, was a great stimulus to the rest of the town. Everyone about that time was afflicted with orchard fever. The big start came, however, when Profs. Fred C. Sears and Frank A. Waugh of the college purchased the large tract of land at the foot of the Holyoke range on Bay Road, known as the Bay Road Fruit Farm.

One of their first settings according to Mr. Atkins, was of 650 MacIntosh which turned out to be Ben Davis trees. This must have been some little surprise and set back to the project. Willard A. Munson, now director of extension at the State college was the first farm manager of the Bay Road Farm. Ted Critchett, now the owner of the farm, followed Mr. Munson as manager. This farm now consists of 150 acres with an annual production of about 40,000 bushels.

Ralph Whitcomb started planting on up the road toward Amherst in 1909 and now has about 15 acres in production. Charles Stiles began the same year and has 25 acres in use with an annual output of 10,000 bushels. The orchards of Mingon Saunders, Herbert Hutchings, Ora Samuel Gray, Fred Johnson, and some few others were set out during this same period. The Gray farm is now owned and operated by Reuben Pomeroy, and the Johnson place is now known as the Parker farm, and operated by Sumner Parker. In 1912 Alfred Hulst set out a large tract of land just over the line in Belchertown, close by the Bridgman place, which is now owned by F. L. Lord. In 1921 Herman Markert set out his place just to the west of the Holyoke-Amherst Road. It was also during this later period, that James Tufts and Hubert Barton increased their orchards, Mr. Barton setting out 100 Northern Spy trees, a variety not grown in any amount by other orchardists in this section. This does not cover all the plantings, but according to Mr. Atkins includes most of the larger ones. Approximately 600 acres of land are planted within a radius of a few miles.

A complete cycle in marketing policy has been experienced by the pioneers in this industry in South Amherst. The railroad haul to distant market was followed by teaming to Holyoke and Springfield, then trucking to the stores or wholesalers, and now again to the metropolitan commission man. The various styles of baskets and tubs were their special methods of packing and facing have been succeeded by the open bushel box, which handles easily and fits compactly into a truck body. Few consumers, Mr. Atkins observes, realize the additional cost which each of these steps in packing and marketing involved.

The importance of cold storage was felt about four years ago, although back in 1917 some apples were preserved in that way. Cold storage warehouses in Springfield have been used by South Amherst growers making daily trips with their trucks. This business became of such volume and importance, however, that local enterprise was inspired to build a cold storage plant, and the one which may be observed on the corner of Pomeroy Road and Holyoke Road, built only last summer at a cost of approximately $50,000 by Reuben Pomeroy, is said to be one of the best in the state, and the only one in Western Massachusetts.



The first cold storage plant in So. Amherst. It was built for 50,000 bushels by Reuben Pomeroy and it looks today on outside much as it did in 1932 except for stores developed facing West Street. (Barbara Tiffany)

The past 10 years have seen a trebling of the apple crop. The next 10, according to Mr. Atkins, will see the present crop doubled again. The gross income to the community from apples is larger than from any other one industry in the community. The employment of 100 extra men at picking time is much valued as a source of income to the community, while there is a number of families which obtain their entire support for the year in the employ of the orchardists in pruning and packing apples through the winter season.

Hundreds of motorists drive through the orchard section during the blossoming time in May. It is a beautiful scene and one that is now often encountered in New England.



Howard Atkins' orchard in full bloom, second week of May. (1984, Fruit Bowl Collection)

VALLEY HAS BECOME FAMOUS FOR ITS FRUIT CROP IN THE PAST 47 YEARS

Daily Hampshire Gazette
Oct. 26, 1935
Nellie Persis Ives

The annual apple show of Oct. 25 26, sponsored by South Amherst Grange, brings a general notice the remarkably fine quality of the apples in this valley and the number of farms on which they are grown.

While nearly every farmer in South Amherst has more or less of an orchard, there are, in this small community, nine orchards of 1,000 or more trees. While all of these orchards make a specialty of MacIntosh, the universal favorite, there are large numbers of Baldwins, Greenings, Northern Spies, Delicious and Wagners, and smaller number of such old favorites as Snow, Pippin, King, Russet, various kinds of sweet apples, and many others.

The first large orchard here was set out in 1888 by George H. Atkins. He was a man of vision, sure that there was a great future for apples, and that the time would come when the farmers of this valley would get more money from apples than from milk. So he set out four loads of little apple



In 1881 Claude Walker remembered this as "the bare hill of Pollux with its lone tree." (Herbert Hutchings recalls it was a Chestnut tree.) Slid down north side of hill. Atkins' orchard planting started in 1902; since then the drumlin has been covered with apple blossoms each spring. This view was open from Atkins' Hill. In 1984 Amherst purchased the hilltop to preserve it for the public. (Miller family photo)



*View from west side of Mt. Pollux, May 10, 1984, week of the sale of the drumlin to Amherst for a park. Houses on Potwine are visible. (Photo by Ellen Fleche, **Amherst Bulletin**)*

trees, a real act of faith. Each year since, more trees have been added, until now his son, William H. Atkins, has over 2,000 trees of very many varieties. It was quite an event when he bought the hill across the road from his house and set it out in 1902 with apples and peaches. This hill is a glacial moraine, called Pollux by geologists, and in blossom-time it presents a beautiful sight.

In 1895, Myron C. Graves, living on the historic old Bridgman place, began setting out apple trees. He was an old man, and he knew he would never harvest many apples from his trees. He said he was setting them out for posterity, a living monument instead of a marble slab. Each year he set out more trees, sometimes among the stumps of partially cleared land. One orchard of Baldwins he leased to the State college for experimental purposes and it is still called the "College Orchard." The farm was sold to Fred Lord of Boston, who has increased the plantings until now Lester Richardson, the farm superintendent, reports 3,000 trees. The Lord farm has its own cold storage plant, with electric refrigeration, with a capacity of 10,000 bushels. This is the only private cold storage plant in this section, though several orchardists have natural storages for apples which do not need to be kept so long.

The next large planting was in 1908, when Professors F.C. Sears and F.A. Waugh bought three farms on the northern slope of the Holyoke range and set out 1,500 trees the first year. They were called "book farmers," their methods were so different, but when their trees began to bear large, highly colored, worm-free fruit — the other farmers around acknowledge the superiority of scientific methods and asked for advice which was always freely given. Each year many more trees were added and the farm was named Bay Road Fruit Farm, a name which has stood for quality. Peaches and plums were set in for a quick money crop, and in 1913 a roadside stand was opened, said to be the first of its kind in New England. Automobiles were not so common then as they are now, and people came with horses from as far away as Brattleboro and the Brookfields for that first fine crop of peaches, $1,200 worth that year. The roadside stand was continued 12 years. By that time most of the farmers, especially those on state roads, had found the roadside selling a profitable way to dispose of their products. In 1927, Edward R. Critchett, who had been farm superintendent 13 years, bought the farm, and now has 8,000 trees. Hundreds of trees set in for "fillers" have been taken out as the permanent trees needed more room.

In 1909 Charles E. Stiles started his orchard with 500 apple trees, and he now has 1,375. He also set out 1,500 peach trees. For about 10 years South Amherst was famous for its fine peaches. Then a succession of cold winters and, finally, the peach borer, ended the peach industry. The only cure for the borer was to cut the trees down and burn them.

The year 1912 was remarkable for the fact that four large orchards were started that spring. F.M. Johnson set out 1,000 apple trees, and 500 the year after, so that, when he sold the farm to Sumner R. Parker in 1919 he had 2,500 apple trees bearing fruit. This farm was sold last spring to William Eberhardt and Carl Libby, from Foxboro.

Herbert C. Hutchings, fresh from M.A.C. that year, with his father, John E. Hutchings, started his orchard that year, which now number more than a 1,000 trees.

In the same year, 1912, Alfred N. Hulst, from Minnesota, set out the beginning of his orchard, which has now between 5,000 and 6,000 apple trees, including many varieties. His daughter, Miss Polly Hulst, now has entire charge of the farm.

DEVELOPMENT OF APPLE GROWING INDUSTRY IN AMHERST

Amherst Record, 12/15/46

by W.R. Brown

It is stated in Judd's "History of Hadley" that there were no engrafted apple trees in that town until some years after 1791, but there was and probably had been for a century a moderate supply of pretty good natural fruit for eating in summer and for sauce and pies in winter. He also states taht in Granby and other towns there were native trees that produced very good apples. Prof. J.K. Shaw of the Pomology Department of the State College, says, however, that although there were native apple trees here when the country was first settled, they did not bear any fruit that was fit for human consumption

For some time after Amherst was settled the neighborhood known as Flat Hills was the only part of town where it was believed that apples could be successfully grown. Miss Flora King who is now 84 says when her great grandfather, Peter King, came to Flat Hills to live in 1820 there were on the farms a lot of big "natural fruit" trees that bore both sweet and sour apples that were nice for cooking. Mrs. Ethel King Folsom says that she once counted thirty-two distinct varieties of apples growing on their Flat Hills farm. She says that right after the 1888 blizzard they sold 800 bushels of choice apples that were shipped to Europe.

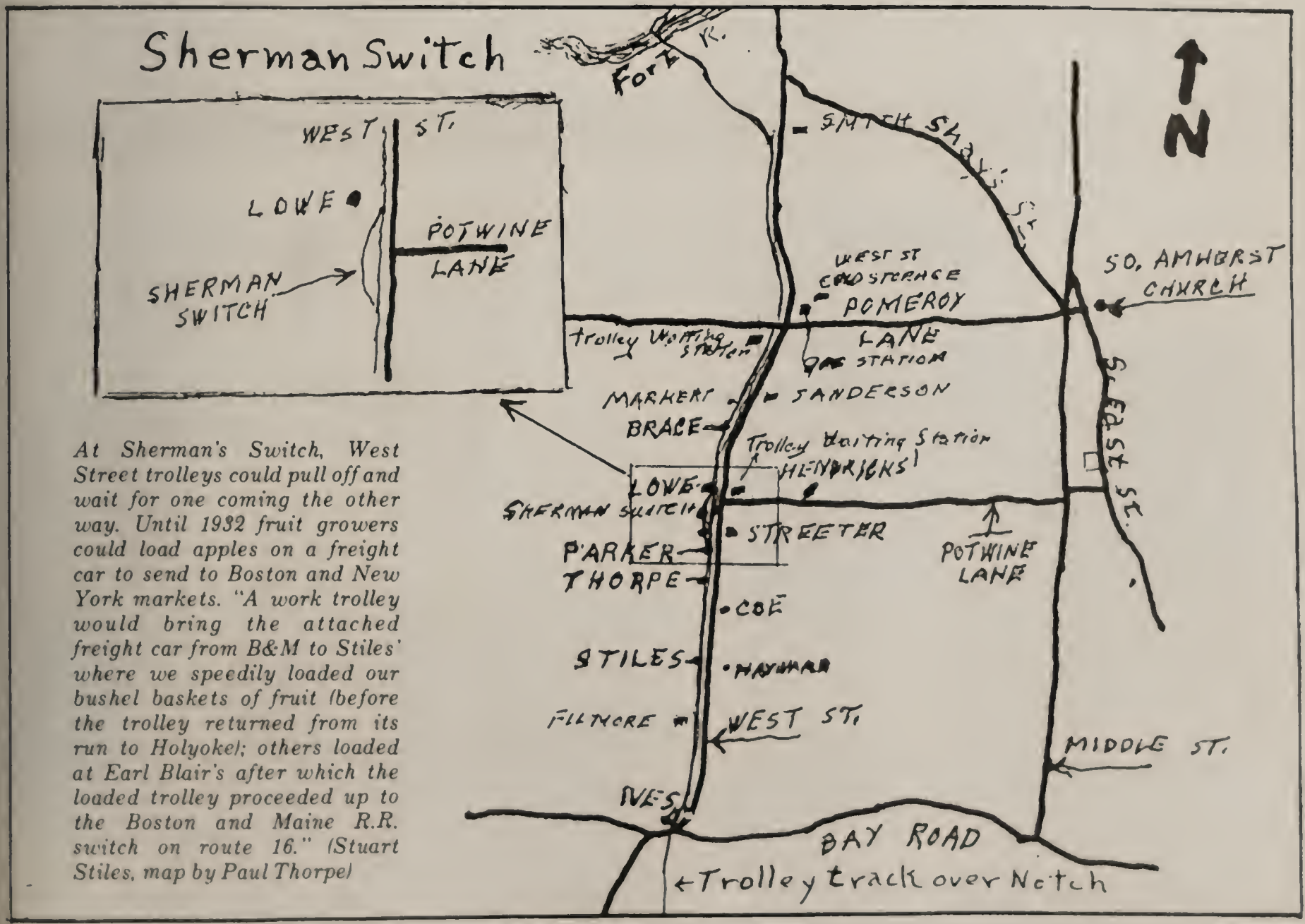
In the early days the New England farmers usually planted their apple trees beside the road and along their fences, stone walls and about their buildings. They rarely, if ever, used acres of good tillage land for apple or any other fruit trees. The first man to plant a block of apple trees and thereby start a big commercial orchard, was George Atkins who set out two loads of trees in 1888. His son, William H., and grandson, William C., now have on their two places nearly 100 acreas in bearing trees. Myron Graves, seven years later, started an orchard on the old Bridgman Tavern farm, now owned by Ernest Markert. He was an old man at the time, and said he didn't expect to harvest many apples, but he thought that growing trees would make a better monument for himself than a marble slab. Mr. Markert now has 95 acres in orchard, of which 65 are in Amherst and 25 in Belchertown. He has the only private electrically refrigerated apple storage plant in this town. (1944)

The biggest orchard in Amherst is known as the "Bay Road Fruit Farm" comprising about 100 acres, now owned and operated by Edward R. Critchett. . . .

A boost was given to apple growing in this section in 1932 when D. Reuben Pomeroy built the cold storage plant on West Street with a capacity of about 50,000 bushels. It is now owned and operated by Wesley J. Wentworth. . . .

Last year Amherst orchards averaged not much over one-fourth a normal crop, and this year not over one-half, therefore the trees, after having three years of partial or complete rest, may be expected to produce a bumper crop next season. There are now about 1,000 acres of bearing trees in Amherst, all excepting the college forty-acre orchard being in the south end of the town. There are on each acre about 35 trees, making the total number in Amherst about 35,000. If these trees average, as they well may, ten bushels per tree, Amherst may harvest next year, 350,000 bushels of apples.

For the last three years the apple crop has been more or less severely injured by cold spring weather killing the fruit buds.



At Sherman's Switch, West Street trolleys could pull off and wait for one coming the other way. Until 1932 fruit growers could load apples on a freight car to send to Boston and New York markets. "A work trolley would bring the attached freight car from B&M to Stiles' where we speedily loaded our bushel baskets of fruit (before the trolley returned from its run to Holyoke); others loaded at Earl Blair's after which the loaded trolley proceeded up to the Boston and Maine R.R. switch on route 16." (Stuart Stiles, map by Paul Thorpe)

APPLE INDUSTRY IN SO. AMHEST

by W. H. Atkins, September 1952

The apple industry has become so well established in its home at South Amherst that the word apple has become synonymous with this district. The orchardist is now in the midst of the harvest season of this fruit.

The yield this year in the New England states is estimated to be but 60 percent of that of last year. Various reasons are given for this, such as poor pollination of the blossom, caused by rainy weather that limited bee activity, plus two heavy frosts in the bloom season. Another is the reduction in number of the trees themselves. No apple trees, no apples!

The cutting down or abandonment of the trees, because of financial loss to the groves, has been on the increase in the last three years until, authorities state, there is, as estimated, a 20 percent reduction of apple trees throughout the apple-growing sections of the Northeast. The cause of this reduction in the number of trees is the excessive costs that have grown into the industry, both in spraying and labor, that has not been met by the financial returns from sales of the fruit.

The boom years of apple tree setting of 1910 to 1920 were started by the late professors F. A. Waugh and F. C. Sears of the Massachusetts State College in the setting of a large acreage in the Bay Road district, in the year 1908. There was hardly a landowner in these areas that had even an acre of land but devoted some of it to apple trees.

Apple Storage

The Stiles brothers, Atkins, and other growers use the Amherst Apple Storage for storing what is not sold at the picking season. We are sure visitors will be welcomed by Raymond Wentworth, the manager of this storage where both men and women may be seen busily grading the fruit as to color, size and perfection, then placing it in boxes, and stamping it, as the state grading law requires, with the grade, size, and grower's name. Some of this fruit goes immediately on the market, the balance into the cooler room. Here at the Amherst Apple Storage, as well as at Mr. Markert's storage, apples may be procured for family consumption as well as for the wholesale outlet throughout the winter season.

In this story perhaps is the answer to the question often asked, "Why the shortage of the apple crop?" The second question, "Why the high price?" is answered by the universal law of supply and demand. The price of apples like that of all other farm products is dependent on this old law. This year the supply is enough short of the demand to create a high market price, while in the years of 1949, '50 and '51 the supply exceeded the demand, thus creating a low price, resulting in a financial loss to most fruit growers and the abandonment of many of the apple trees.

However this all may be, the efficient fruit growers, and they alone, will take the good and poor years in their stride and continue at least for a time in producing attractive, appetizing apples in South Amherst.

Since 1940 there has been a gradual reduction in the number of apple trees. The last two years have seen the totals decrease at an increasingly rapid rate until more than 20 percent of the apple trees of South Amherst have given up the fight for existence inasmuch as the depleted financial returns from the fruit and the difficulty of growing good fruit has led many of the growers to surrender to the inevitable and drop out of fruit growing.

The main fruit orchards of today doing business are those of E. R. Critchett (Bay Road Orchards), the Markert Brothers, the Stiles Brothers, and the Atkins. These four produce not less than 90 percent of all the fruit grown in South Amherst. The continued battling against the fungi and insect injury makes fruit growing a real science calling for the most skillful management. In spite of all this, the orchardists who have met the rules and regulations laid down for producing choice fruit can show again this fall an attractive product, though limited in amount, from trees in South Amherst.

Sight to Behold

There is no more satisfying sight than an apple tree laden with fruit and further to see the fruit as it is packed away into boxes for the winter consumption. E. R. Critchett has the most extensive orchard, a portion of which may be seen on either side of the Bay Road. It is a "sight for the eyes" to look upon the Cortland tree, which can now be seen bowing to the earth laden with its fiery red fruit. All orchardists sell some during the picking season, but the major portion is put away in the cold storage for the later markets. Mr. Critchett serves the public through the picking season at his attractive roadside stand with appetizing fruit from his own orchards. He grades the fruit in nearby buildings and stores the greater portion in a Springfield cold storage.

Ernest Markert has a cold storage of his own which gives him a distinct advantage over those dependent upon public storages. He places most of his apples in the cooler ungraded until he takes them out later as they are called for by trade. Having these facilities at hand, Mr. Markert has had the courage to clear a section of forest land, on the hillside bordering the Bay Road and has made a fairly large setting of apple trees interplanted with the peach, thus dividing his financial gamble between the apple and the peach.

It was also in 1912 that Rev. Ora Samuel Gray bought land on Green street and set out the orchard which was later bought by D. Reuben Pomeroy, which now consists of 2,500 bearing trees.

The last large orchard was set out by Herman C. Markert in 1921. At present he has about 2,000 trees. He had also 1,000 pear trees and 1,500 peach trees, but, like all the others, he lost his peaches, and the severe winters have taken a heavy toll from his pear orchards, also.

In 1932, D. Reuben Pomeroy built the South Amherst apple storage, thoroughly modern in every way, with a capacity of 50,000 bushels. Here are stored not only local apples, but many from miles away, Vermont, Apple Valley in Colrain, and this year he has 15,000 bushels from Harvard, 72 miles to the east.

It takes a large sum of money to care for an orchard each year, tons of fertilizer, spray materials and dust. Then a short hail storm cuts the apples and a crop which should bring $1.50 or $2 per bushel may possibly sell for 25 cents per bushel instead. Or, just a fine crop is nearly ready to pick, a heavy rain with a gale of wind comes up, and the ground is covered with beautiful apples, bruised beyond all usefulness, unless a few may be made into cider. Sometimes after such a storm many truck-loads are drawn away and dumped, for waste apples must not be left under the trees, for fear of railroad worms infecting another crop. The extreme cold weather of early 1934 froze large numbers of Baldwin trees so that they split and died. These had to be dug out and replaced by little trees, thus making the Baldwin crops short for years.

Yet in spite of all this, these nine orchards have produced this year 96,000 bushels of apples. Many of these have been sold already and many are in storage either in the South Amherst storage or in Springfield storage, which holds 90,000 bushels and is full.

APPLES - A WAY OF LIFE

by Kristin O'Connell
News Release 1982

For most of us, apples are a seasonal pleasure, to be savored along with the resplendent colors of the autumn foliage. But for Howard Atkins, they're much more: a livelihood, a family tradition, a year-around way of life. His orchards cover more than 300 acres in South Amherst, Hadley, and Belchertown, and produce from 110,000 to 140,000 bushels of apples per year.

Some of these are made into cider (150,000 gallons annually). Of the remainder, 80 percent go to supermarkets and wholesalers throughout southern New England, and the rest are sold directly to consumers by mail order or at the Atkins Fruit Bowl complex on Route 116, where on a Sunday in the fall as many as 10,000 people may stop in to buy produce and baked goods or wind up their foliage-viewing with a cup of cider and a doughnut.

The Atkins family enterprise began in 1887, when George Atkins, Howard's grandfather, decided to give up the vagabond life of an itinerant seller of fruit trees and bought property on South East Street. There was an orchard already on the land, but he put out 13 new McIntosh trees in the spring of '88 — the first of that variety to be shown in South Amherst.

In every sense, his seed has prospered. Both George and his son William bought new land and set out more trees. In the 30 years since Howard Atkins acquired title to the property, the number of trees has increased tenfold, through acquisition of established orchards as well as a continuing program of purchase, clearing and planting of "raw" acreage. Though Howard Atkins, now 70, is personally beginning what he calls "A phase of slowdown," he envisions further expansion of the business, most immediately on 110 acres purchased within the last year and now being cleared. By next spring some of it will be ready for planting.

Today's commercial fruit production, of course, is a far cry from the hopeful seed-scattering that we associate with the image of Johnny Appleseed. With a payroll of over $1 million a year, Atkins emphasizes that he "relies on the capabilities and dedication of many people" at every stage of the process from nurturing new trees to packaging and selling the harvest.



Young trees in bloom below Sabin Road, Belchertown, seen through the deer fence erected to protect them from the roaming white tails. (Elliott, 1984)



Pauline Lannon, Executive Manager Atkins Farms, oversees outdoor lunch of Annual Meeting of Mass. Fruit Growers' Assoc. at Mass. Horticultural Farm. (Fruit Bowl Collection)

New shoots are purchased each year from Holland. These are planted in Atkins' nursery in the spring, then grafted with buds from an established tree of the desired variety in late summer. After two years in the nursery, they are set out in permanent locations. This happens in early spring, just after the ground has thawed and been given its yearly infusion of fertilizers. It takes five more years before a tree yields enough fruit to cover the cost of a single year's spraying.

From blossom time in May through the harvest season, the crop is threatened by natural hazards. Too much rain during blossoming keeps bees away, preventing pollination, while rain at harvest time inhibits picking with the result that apples drop and are lost. A drought of five weeks or more leads to disappointingly small apples. A temperature in the low 20's at any time during the growing season endangers the crop. Because the air is warmer just 35 feet above the trees, Atkins has occasionally hired helicopers to hover over the orchards on a cold night and stir up the air enough to raise its temperature.



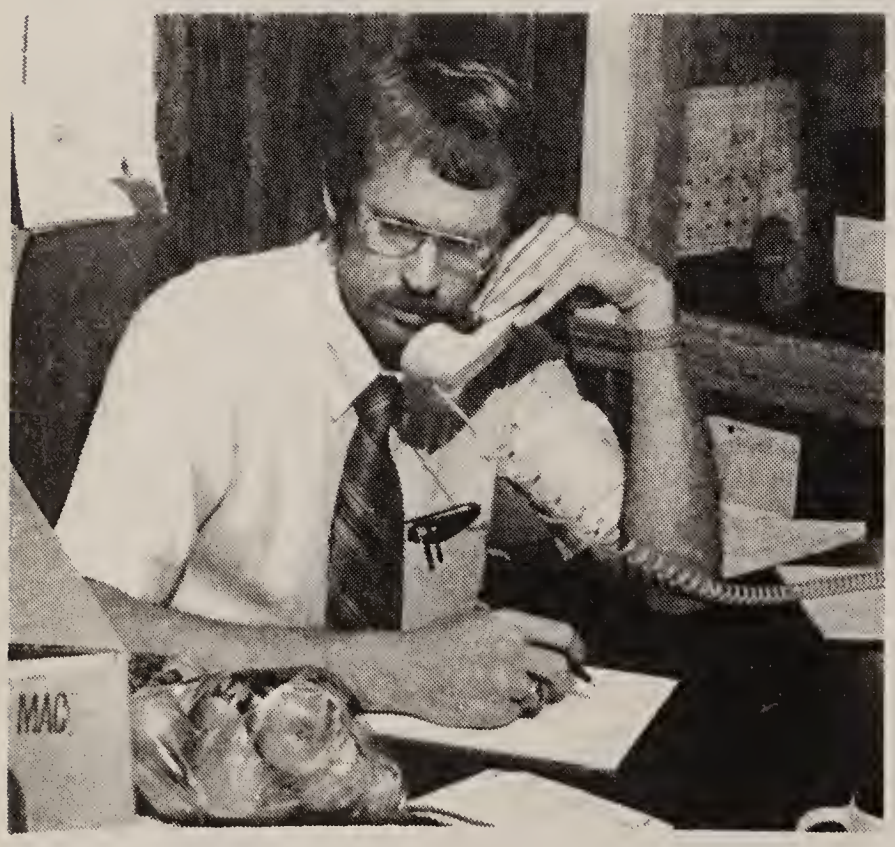
Manzate spray is misted in Atkins orchard against scab in early June, a critical time "for little apples." It was also used May 21, 1985, the day after a hail storm. (Fruit Bowl Collection)

Trees are sprayed weekly throughout the growing season to protect them from fungi and insects. Since mice can kill a tree by nibbling away the bark at the base, the orchardists who care for the trees scatter poisoned corn, mow the grass to eliminate cover, and wrap wire guards around the trunks.

Harvest time begins around July 20 and goes on until hard frost, sometime late in October. Quintes and July Reds are

the first to ripen, followed by Early Macs, Miltons, and Red Gravensteins. The McIntoshes, accounting for two-thirds of Atkins' acreage, come in around September 10 and then the Macouns, Cortlands, and Red and Golden Delicious. The last to be ready are the Northern Spies, Empires, Ida Reds and Red Romes.

Atkins has three storage facilities. The largest (in Belchertown), also houses a cider mill and the sorting and packing operation. Apples can be stored for months at temperatures just above freezing, in an atmosphere of reduced oxygen and increased carbon dioxide. All through the year, apples are taken out of storage and sorted; first by weight, in a machine that handles 150 bushels an hour. Then 12 full time employees divide the fruit by appearance; separating the first quality from the smaller or less perfect, which may be used for cider or sold at lower prices at the Atkins store. "Those are the real bargains," Atkins points out.



Dan Atkins, son of H.W. Atkins, President and Manager of Atkins Farms Fruit Marketing Corp., in charge of wholesale marketing, the Belchertown storage and cider making operation. (Fruit Bowl Collection)

The last of the year's crop comes out of storage in July, just as the new apples begin to come in. "One of the advantages of the apple," says Atkins, "is that there are so many different flavors. At any time in the year we usually have five or more varieties on hand." Atkins already grows about 35 different varieties, but he continues to introduce new ones. Just coming to maturity are 100 trees of a strain called Burgundy. Atkins describes it as "very flavorful, very slightly tart — a sprightly apple to eat." It also holds its shape through cooking. "We think it's a comer," he says. He has similarly high hopes for the Mutsu, a variety developed in Japan from the Golden Delicious and a Japanese strain. Asked about his personal favorites, Atkins mentions the Macoun, the Burgundy, and the Golden Delicious. Then he adds, "The Macoun is probably generally recognized today as the finest eating apple, but I wouldn't be surprised if some of the new varieties, like the Mutsu, end up becoming just as popular."



Malcolm Clark, "the jugger," working at the cider bottler at So. East Storage Plant during Ev. Dimock's supervision there, using apples taken from the storage in winter and spring. Now done at Belchertown plant. Pressed apple juice runs into refrigerated tank by hose and then into cider just. Bottled and kept in refrigerated room. Three hundred thousand gallons are made from 90,000 bushels or 3 gal. to the bushel. (Fruit Bowl Collection)



The "rack and cloth" press, where juice was expressed from 12 layers of chopped apples. (Fruit Bowl Collection)



Stanley Kielbasa, General Manager, Atkins' Farms, and Bill Atkins, two long-time fellow workers -Kielbasa formerly manager of Critchett's Farm which was bought by Howard Atkins. Bill has worked in every capacity full time on the Atkins' Farms for 28 years. (Fruit Bowl Collection)

PRUNERS PRUNE WHILE ORCHARD SLEEPS

The Hampshire Drumlin, Amherst, Mass.
Feb. 5, 1981
By Norman Myrick

In between stints as a steeple chase course for motorcycle cowboys and snowmobile gauchos the orchard continues on its appointed course of producing apples. Right now the pruners are back in this part of Howard Atkins' extensive plantations.

A five man crew under the direction of Bill Atkins, who also serves as a Selectman, is at work getting the orchard ready for the leaves and blossoms which will show soon, unlikely as it may seem at the moment.

Queried on the fine points of pruning, Bill Atkins said, "Well, I tell my boys, when you get through you ought to be able to throw a cat through the tree."



A brace of cats was seen accompanying the pruning crew but no tests were observed. However, responding to the presence of an intrusive dog the cats did find a claw hold in the nearest tree. Bill denied that the episode constituted a test. The motorcycles and beer drinkers permitting, the effectiveness of the pruning should be apparent in the crop come fall.

Bees and apple blossoms go together for five days of bloom, usually May 7 to May 12. (M.A. Elliott)



Reggie O'Connor, Liaison officer of the gov't of British West Indies, and Stanley Kielbasa shown walking up the dirt road into the Belchertown fruit orchard from Sabin St. Below, the first planting of trees in Belchertown, (1964). (Fruit Bowl Collection)

ATKINS FARMS TIDINGS
in 30 May 1985

By the end of this week, all of the 120 hives of bees that were distributed in the orchards in early May will be collected by the owners from our orchards. As we drove through the orchards of Belchertown this past week, it was evident that they were busy collecting nectar from the apple blossoms; they did their job well. Occasionally there will emerge from a hive of bees a second queen bee. She will take over the hive or she will leave the hive, taking with her the worker bees. Although they do not have a hive, the worker bees will follow the queen and en masse around her, moving from tree to tree, usually leaving the tree in the latter part of the afternoon.

When a "swarm" is spotted, we try to capture it in one of our own hives; it will be cared for over the winter, and used for pollination next spring. It is a challenging chore and one needs to be a determined and calm person to do it. The one who is usually the most alert and does the best job is Mr. Atkins himself.

I had the opportunity to watch him the other day from a distance. I realized it was one of his more "serious" moments as he carefully lined up, first a blanket and then an empty hive, beneath the swarm that was in the tree. After determining that his calculations were correct, he took a deep breath and simply snapped the branch of the tree so that the swarm fell, still en masse, into the hive. Yes, simple, but in my mind, very daring as he shrugged off the fact that he was stung only once. . . .

Pauline Farman



Each spring some bees form a new swarm from the 90 rented hives. As usual, Howard Atkins takes on the job of transferring the errant swarm into a slatted box below, rarely getting stung. (1985, Fruit Bowl Collection)

Atkins' Belchertown orchards. Emptying the more delicate Golden Delicious into ½ bins lined with plastic, later folded over apples to prevent dehydration, using Wells & Wade "picking buckets" to prevent bruising. Stanley Baj, manager of Belchertown Farms discusses harvest with Mike Rossi, at his right, while three other pickers continue, 1983. (Fruit Bowl Collection)



Just one corner of a bin holding 15 bushels of the 150,000 bushel crop in a good year. "Picture them red." (M.A. Elliott, 1976)



Atkins' truck carrying 24 bins loaded in the orchard with a fork lift. The truck driver, Charlie Wojewoda, drives SLOWLY to the (former Markert) Storage on Bay Road. (Fruit Bowl Collection, 1984)



ATKINS FARM TIDINGS
May 1985

The night of May 8th proved to be a long, nerve-racking one for several of our men who worked the frost control as temperatures fell to 23 and 24 degrees; a temperature too cold for many of the apple blossoms. We pulled out all stops to do all that we could to combat the dangerous frost.

First, we called in four helicopters; two from New Hampshire for the Belchertown orchards and two from Connecticut for the Amherst orchards. General Farm Manager, Stanley Kielbasa worked with the helicopters in Amherst and Belchertown. Farm Manager, Stanley Baj worked in Belchertown. As they watched the temperature on the ground, they would communicate with the pilots via radio, directing them where and for how long to fly over certain areas. As the planes hovered over the orchards, they would force down the warmer air from above the trees. But the temperatures stayed too cold for too long and the warmer air was exhausted. The frost won out in the orchards in Amherst and a fair amount of damage was done. However, damage in Belchertown orchards was minimal because many of the orchards are at higher altitudes than those in Amherst. And our Hadley orchards were not affected by frost at all.

Further efforts to save the apples were with water irrigation in some of the orchards off South East Street in Amherst and for the pear orchards in Amherst we were ready with gas heaters. Starting the gas heaters was taken care of by Robert Edwards who has had that responsibility for several years. But once again, the cold was too much and many of the pear buds were damaged. However, we also have pear orchards in Belchertown, many coming into heavy production this year, that were not damaged.

Bob Edwards said he was surprised at how long the cold lasted that morning. Even at 6:30, he pointed out that it was still too cold for us to put our bedding plants back on display outside at the retail store. Bob has been working with us since 1970 and has a pretty good idea of when we have to be on the alert for frost. He is often one of the first to be awake if the weather changes and alerts the rest of the crew. Although Bob has many a spring night when he does not get very much sleep, it is a relief for us to know that he is on watch. . . .

Pauline Lannon



The George Gundersons from Sycamore Knolls were met over coffee. They are weekly customers at the Fruit Bowl. They sent me material on the new Friends of the Range Club which seeks to guide and educate people in enjoying without damaging the mountains' flora. (M.A. Elliott, 1985)



Harold Gould, long time manager of Fruit Bowl, "on the go" for more fruit to restock the outdoor shelves. (Fruit Bowl Collection, 1982)



Aerial view of the Fruit Bowl after the greenhouse addition and before the bakery, 1979. At junction of Bay Road and West Street. (Fruit Bowl Collection)



This is the way Sophie Kielbasa Wojewoda has greeted each customer over 20 years at the Fruit Bowl. (M.A. Elliott, 1985)

SOUTH AMHERST BOUNTY
News Release, Oct. 23, 1923

It is estimated that over 4,000 baskets of peaches have been harvested in Amherst this year and that the apple crop will amount to more than 12,000 barrels. The greatest part of this crop is raised in South Amherst, the principal growers being the Bay Road Fruit farm, William H. Atkins, Charles Stiles, Sumner R. Parker, George Dana, D. Reuben Pomeroy, Hubert C. Barton, Fred Lord and Alfred N. Hulst.



H. Atkins' Peach Orchard, at the Brown lot, looking toward Hampshire College, West St. (Everett Dimock, 1985)



Naomi (Mrs. W.H.) Atkins in her wicker buggy (given her in 1918 by her husband's half-brother, Fred Morton) pulled by "Beauty" in the orchard below the barn. Circa 1925. Others are Barbara Tiffany and Marjorie Atkins; "Billy" standing. (Atkins)



H. Atkins' So. East St. Cold Storage with two sealed atmospheric cold storage rooms, built in 1956. First cider press operated here by Dimock and crew. (Children play ball between building and street.) (H. McChesney, 1972)



Dale Atkins, Farm Consultant, Atkins Farms, 1978. (Atkins)

LIFE IN 1893
Belchertown, Mass.

Dear Marge,

Yesterday when I was at my Dad's I walked over to talk with his neighbor, Raymond Gould (85 yrs. old). He recently lost his wife, an invalid for six years.

He reminisced about the A.B. Howard family. He and his boy friends used to pick strawberries for Arthur Howard. For each basket, the picker received a ticket. "Pay-day" was always on the 4th of July. The boys would go down to your grandfather's and he paid off when tickets were turned in. Then, they'd go up town and in a few hours would spend their money in celebrating the Fourth.

He used to ride with Everett Howard to Ware when strawberries were taken there by horse and wagon. He recalls the extremely "long" journey to Ware and even longer up-hill trip home.

He remembers "Will" Atkins courting Naomi Howard. Also Harold Ketchen has told me how he and his friends swapped the large rear wheels for the small front wheels on "Will's" wagon when he was in calling on Naomi!

Ruth



Conn. Fruit Growers on trip to Mass. grouped around the statue, "Hail to the Sunrise," a memorial to the Mohawk Nation, just off the Mohawk Trail. Howard and W.H. Atkins with them. (W.H. Atkins, August, 1933)



Bill (Wm. C.) Atkins, jovial and capable worker on the Atkins Fruit Farm, and active participant in town and school affairs. (Howard Atkins, 1985)

BILL ATKINS IS AT HOME, IN FAMILY APPLE ORCHARDS, AMHERST GOVERNMENT

By Bill Babel

Springfield Republican, 3/23/1980

AMHERST — William (Bill) Atkins, 62, is a fruit farmer by day. He is project manager of 300 acres of apple orchards for his brother, Howard, in Amherst and Belchertown.

You can't get Bill Atkins by phone during the day because he's up in the orchards pruning fruit trees this time of year.

Atkins Fruit Farms were developed from the first plantings by his grandfather in 1888. Bill Atkins has worked for the family enterprise, which includes a fruit store, for 27 years.

By night, he wears a different hat. That's when he takes on community duties. For Bill Atkins is chairman of the five-man Amherst Board of Selectmen.

Atkins got into community work 18 years ago when he was elected to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee. By virtue of his regional School Committee job, he also served on the Amherst elementary school committee.

He served on the regional committee for 12 years, on the Amherst finance committee for two years, and as a selectman for four years. He's in the first year of his second three-year term as a selectman.

Bill Atkins has had what might be described as a "love affair" with the Town of Amherst over those 18 years. He's proud of his town. He is what university people call a "townie," meaning an Amherst native.

The selectman waves his hand toward the university and two colleges and asks, "Where would Amherst be without them? Amherst would be nothing. It would probably be just a farming community today. The university and two colleges bring a lot of money into this town."

The University of Massachusetts has 24,000 students at Amherst and 1,400 faculty members. Its gross budget is $147 million. Amherst College has 1,500 students with a faculty of 150. Gross budget is $18 million. Hampshire College has 1,200 students with a faculty of 100 people and a $9 million gross budget. It is estimated that the average student has $750 a year for spending money.

Education, for Amherst, is big business. There is no other industry in Amherst of any significance than Atkins Fruit Farms. And, as a result there is no industrial pollution.

So virtually all the town's problems — and most of its assets — can be linked to the presence of the colleges.

Atkins is well-spoken, interested and well-informed. He speaks easily about Amherst and its problems. "When we have problems in this town," he says firmly, "we solve them."

For 18 years he's been in the midst of all the action in Amherst. As a result, he has a good perspective of the town, an advantage few others have.

But solving problems in Amherst is made much easier because of the nature of the voting community. University people are usually well-informed and vote to support what is going to make for a better community. And they usually are well paid so they can financially support community improvements. . . .

"One of the problems we faced in our school system in the past decade," said Atkins, "came because of the heavy influx of graduate students with families. Our schools had no way of anticipating the number of elementary students to expect each fall. Graduate students only stay one or two years, sometimes three, and they leave again.

"Our high school and junior high also became overcrowded because the university was growing.

So we built an addition to the high school, a new junior high and three new elementary schools. We should be in good shape now at least until the year 2000."

The university community, always education conscious, supported the much expanded Amherst school system. "If we had been a factory town," said Atkins, "the voters might have said 'what was good enough for me is good enough for my children'."

Faculty members of college staffs run for town office, said Atkins, and participate in various ways in town government. Amherst has eight precincts of 30 Town Meeting representatives each, and many of those representatives are professors . . .

The biggest headache selectmen faced recently, said Atkins, came because of the change in the drinking age in the state. (The legal age was raised to 20.). . .

Amherst, a town of 22,000 according to the 1975 state census, has a town budget of about $14 million. Home building and apartment building, said Atkins, have ground to a halt because of the high cost and the lack of mortgage money. Many faculty people have taken up residence in towns in a 25-mile radius of Amherst. . . .

But despite the lack of new housing in Amherst, the town keeps spending money for improvements.

"We are putting in a new well," said Atkins, "that will give us about two million more gallons of water a day. We use between 3.2 and 3.8 million gallons of water a day. The new well will give us up to six million gallons a day in total production capacity."

In addition to an expanded water system, the town has completed a new $15 million sewage treatment plant that will replace an outdated one. "We're using it," said Atkins, "even though we haven't voted to accept it yet."

Selectmen turned their attention the other night to a long-standing problem. That's downtown parking.

"We have a nice downtown shopping area. We actually have a mall. It's just not enclosed. We need downtown parking. . . . We are talking options."

Atkins said selectmen ran down a list of possibilities from opening the Town Hall parking lot on Saturdays to shoppers, to providing mini-car and big-car parking lots, to building a downtown parking garage. . . .

Bill Atkins paused and commented: "Amherst is an interesting town. I think it's a healthy one."

Selectmen's duties take him to Town Hall at least two nights a week. As chairman of the board, he automatically serves on the university's Board of Trustees. That's one more night a month. And there are committee meetings in between.

And always problems. Not minor ones, but major ones.

What keeps Bill Atkins going and vitally interested isn't the pay. He gets $300 a year as selectman. It's the satisfaction .

MARKET GARDENING IN SOUTH AMHERST

Market gardening is a small business that has been a success for the South Amherst growers with greenhouses who give it full time.

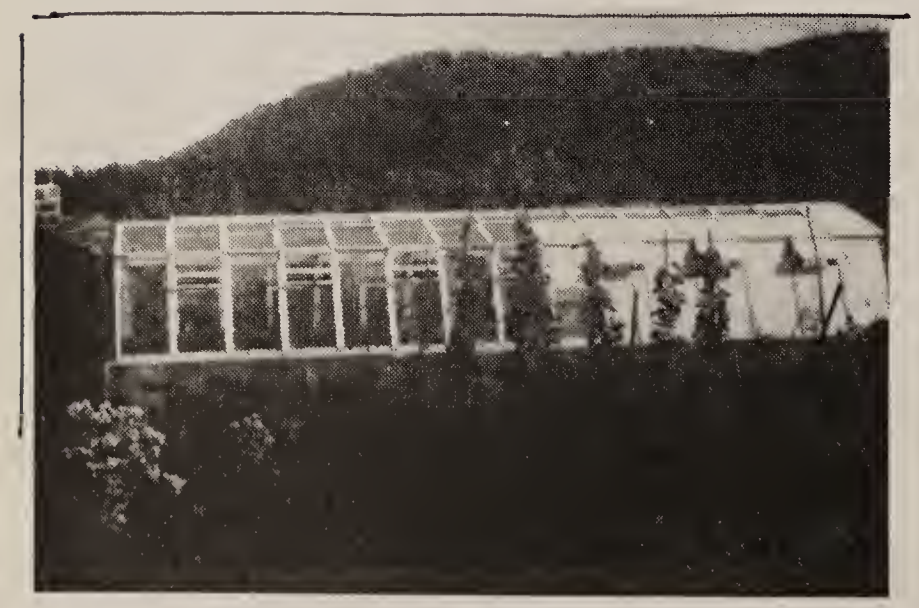
Win Shumway and Dave Goodrich, lifetime market gardeners, raised vegetables — potatoes, squash, etc. on the south side of Potwine Lane, on four acres formerly used by Joe Kershlis for tobacco. (Picture p. 164)

Win's greenhouses are on a slope back of the house on S. East St. His fingers work knowingly with seeds and plants. In 1982 he said, "Dave and I transplant eight hours a day, eight days a week." They made a team. For a decade the two men carried petunia plants as a gift to the Amherst Junior High School, "Nine flats, 6 boxes to a flat, 8 plants in each." Now, with Dave gone, Win's son Bill is assisting as much as is needed.



Win Shumway's greenhouses at 1146 South East St., the source of early flower and vegetable plants for decades. (Win Shumway, 1982)

Bill Atkins has an inherited love for the soil. As a young man he had two greenhouses where he raised tomato plants, etc., in addition to working for his dad. Later, at another location, he raised poinsettias and other floral plants, selling some to the Fruit Bowl.



George McIntyre, 1901-1979 built a greenhouse in the late 1940's, where he raised floral plants under glass, 891 Bay Road. (McIntyre)

Down on Bay Road, George McIntyre, retired, erected a green house around 1947 where he and his wife leisurely pursued their love of growing things. In 1950 he worked for Earl Goman, a successful commercial grower with three greenhouses behind his house (later President Longworth's) near the Green. Earl saw that the old watering tub for horses was filled with flowering plants each spring, a welcome to Fiddler's Green.



Mt. Norwottuck seen today across Andrew Cowles' strawberry beds on the south side of Potwine Lane, in a field formerly used by Win Shumway to grow potatoes. (See picture p. 164 of boys planting potatoes.) Before Win, Joe Kershlis grew cigar leaf tobacco here. (M. Elliott)

Now Andrew Cowles is a market gardener, two doors down from his friend and long-time teacher, Win. He sells wholesale to the Fruit Bowl and locally to satisfied customers, or to newcomers drawn into his yard by the floral beauty near the road. He is grateful for family help in this time-consuming work; like Earl Goman before him, he donates plants for Children's Day in May at the church.

South Amherst is the better for its market gardeners.

ANDREW'S GREENHOUSE

FALL HOURS
T-Th 9-4:30 F-Sun. 9-5:30
Closed Mondays

1178 So. East St., So. Amherst
South of the Common

A November 1985 ad in the **Amherst Bulletin.**

Letters From Home
To
Area Servicemen
1943 – 1946

HOW IT ALL CAME ABOUT

In 1943 the South Congregational Church, Amherst, MA, developed the project of monthly letters to servicemen. A committee was composed of the pastor, Rev. Louis Toppan (now of Hill, NH). W. H. Atkins, Mrs. Charles (Grace) King, Mrs. John (Grace) Lowe, and Mrs. Norman (Marjorie) McLeod.

The former pastor recently reviewed church bulletins during those war years and sent these extracts: In October 1943, 33 names were listed. In the June 24, 1945 letter, Mr. Atkins lists 44. He, and Mrs. King, wrote the letters; the committee addressed and mailed them. In time, the total recipients numbered 55. The letter reached many servicemen "north of Norwottuck," carrying the solicitude and support of the So. Congregational Church to those young people far from home and in perilous places. Many of them expressed gratitude for this thoughtful project. (Editor)

From a letter by Reverend Louis C. Toppan April 20, 1980

. . .My memory of the South Amherst servicemen's letter project is very sketchy and I have none of the letters. The idea was your father's and I am sure he did the composition. The project is mentioned in five church bulletins between October 17, 1943 and November 17, 1946. I quote:

Bulletin 10/17/1943

The committee for correspondence with soldier boys wishes to report that with one exception letters have gone out once a month. One sample letter in reply says, "More than glad to get your letter". Mrs. Toppan helps the committee in compiling the news and doing the mimeograph work. There are thirty-three names on the list. Please notify the committee of any change of address.

W. H. Atkins, Mrs. Charles King, Mrs. John (Max) Lowe, Mrs. Norman McLeod.

Bulletin 1/21/1945

"At a service to be held at seven-thirty on the evening of February fourth, we will dedicate our Serviceman's Shrine. Thus will be brought to fulfillment the desire of the church body, as indicated some time ago, to suitably honor the Protestant servicemen of South Amherst.. A service flag has been purchased with a star for each Protestant man from our community who wears the uniform of our country. The names of such men will be listed in a beautiful leather-bound book, which is a gift of the deacons, and this book will be placed on an altar beneath the service flag. Thus we will honor those who have gone to fight for us, and also symbolize in visible form our prayers to God on their behalf. As a Christian Church, we seek to express something more in our service flag than is to be found in the honor roll of a secular organization of town. Our shrine is an expression of fellowship among men, and of the supreme fellowship of man with God."

Bulletin 5/27/1945

"May we remind you that the subscription to the serviceman's letters for other than servicemen is fifty cents for the rest of the calendar year. Arrangements should be made with Mr. Atkins soon if you wish to receive the May letter."

Bulletin 12/2/1945

In an insert to the bulletin which looked forward to the 1946 budget are the following words: "Monthly newsletters are prepared and sent to practically all servicemen from the community."

Bulletin 11/17/1946

In notes explaining the 1947 church budget there are two deletions from the 1946 budget. "Thirty dollars saving is possible because we no longer send the servicemen's letters."

South Congregational Church in Amherst
October 7, 1943

A frosted Greeting—

With rainbow trimming to you South Amherst men in uniform. The dull brown footsteps of September's chilling frosts are already harmonized with October's glorious pageant of vivid foliage color. Pa's victory garden is a sort of ragged ghost of its former beautiful self, but just peek into mother's downstairs cupboards. See all the extra shelves added this year to hold the grand array of vegetables, jams, jellies, pickles, preserves, etc., all tightly sealed and ready to help out this war winter's rationed and restricted food schedule . . .

School busses have made many spare trips transporting student-soldiers, co-eds, Boy Scouts, and high school pupils to and from the apple orchards, and a procession of big trucks from the cities are hauling away tons of the apple crop which cannot be stored in the refrigerator plants. Hail bitten apples have largely gone, eight hundred bushels dumped loosely in the car, to Philadelphia to come back to us as apple butter. Or perhaps you will be having some wherever you are.

Some of our South Amherst cows have had bad luck. One of Markert's exchanged bad words with one of Earl Blair's. Soon they were fighting across the fence. Something was wrong with the control and they were electrocuted. Herb Hutchings' cow ate too many protein chicken pellets. Being unused to such a powerful diet she died. One of Judd's cows worried so about the feed shortage that she died. Imagine our concern to see all these steaks wasted!

Now about our South Amherst people! Mr. and Mrs. Schoonmaker have gone to Florida with Ruth for the winter, because of his health. He will work, Ruth will go to school, and Mrs. will try to keep them both straight. Meanwhile Bob, Jack, and Jim are sharing in the operation of the Schoonmaker domain. Word has come that Herb Hutchings is finding a successful place in the Navy. Cliff Tiffany is in South Africa. So far we have only good news from our local boys, for which we are very thankful. Mrs. Toppan has just completed a month's work as a substitute in the Western Union. (The parson claims to be a shadow of his former self!) Bill Atkins is putting up a new green house to keep himself out of mischief. One wonders if it will work!

Sincerely,
The South Amherst Church Committee



Clifford Tiffany, Jr. (of 1459 So. East St.) World War II. (Alice Tiffany)



Herbert Hutchings, in the Navy, one of three brothers to serve. Herbert married Majorie Felker of the Green. (Mrs. Herbert Hutchings, Sr., 1491 So. East St.)



April 28, 1944

South Amherst Servicemen,

The committee of the South Church sends you the greetings of the spring time. Yesterday was the first real warm day, the thermometer getting up to 70 degrees. Win Shumway and other market gardeners have their cabbage out. Grass is beginning to look a little green about the door yards.

Fishermen have been out trying to catch all of the fish in the brook. Last Saturday morning it is said 106 fishermen and 46 cars were counted at Mill Valley. I think it would have been easier to hook onto a fisherman than a fish!

There are many grass fires. One of Mr. Atkins' men dropped a match after lighting a cigarette, while pruning apple trees back of the church — the fire department had to be called before the fire was extinguished. Another grass fire was on Frank Gage's lot. The Frank Bailey house on West Street that was partially burned has been sold to another party who will repair it. Tony Marco has bought the house on Middle Street belonging to Mrs. Clinton Wales and will soon move into it.

An effort is being made to form a troop of "Cubs" — younger than the Boy Scouts — with a council committee of Wesley Wentworth, William Kershlis, and Harold Wentworth. The Boy Scouts took a trip on bicycles last Saturday to Mt. Hermon and stayed over night at the hostel in Northfield. Sunday they went to church in Millers Falls on their way home. Rain was falling and they got well soaked. They are out on the road today but we have not heard what the program is to be. We also have a Girl Scout troop. Mrs. James Schoonmaker is leader of this.

Mr. A. S. Garrabrants will go into the Red Cross work next month as "field supervisor" in the camps. He hopes to be sent overseas after his training.

Rev. Herbert Wilkins, Negro Pastor of Saint John's Church in Springfield, spoke to South Amherst people last Friday night on inter-racial problems. We expect you boys meet many boys not of your nationality, whether it be Polish, French, Italian, Jew, or English, and find in them as fine qualities as in your own nationality.

We saw Tony Marco out this morning creosoting the Gypsy Moth. The apple men are all out putting oil on apple trees to kill the "red mite". The ground is wet and soft — it is not unusual to see a car or tractor out in someone's field stuck in the mud. This is where the old "Cletrac" has the laugh on them.

Most recent arrivals are a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. John Leslie, and a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Roland Hebert.

Your Committee of Home Folks

Rev. Louis Toppan, Mrs. Max. Lowe, Mrs. Charles King, Mrs. Norman McLeod, and W.H. Atkins

May 27, 1944

Greetings to you, Uncle Sam's South Amherst boys:

June of nineteen forty-four finds us here at home rejoicing in the fact that no enemy bombs have wrecked our homes, and fields, and highways. This message to you from us is an assurance that we are busily carrying on; that in the midst of our own unexcelled bit of New England's springtime beauty, our thoughts and blessings go out to you while our heads and hands work to make these home places all that you want them to be when you come back to us.

Around our rugged old Norwottuck mother nature has dropped a mantle of softest, brightest green, even spreading out the fringe of her leafy mantle over the rambling range on either side. And up from all your familiar apple orchards, as well as from the fruit trees and lilac bushes in the yards and paths and byways of our homes, has sprung a wondrous glory of fragrant delicate bloom. . .

Time moves on and we find that it waits for no man. Trees have been in bloom earlier than usual which brought calyx spraying early. We had a freeze May 19 and 20 which killed all fruit on low land and severely injured the set on top of the hill. We can tell better in our next letter what the outlook is for apples and peaches. Win Shumway's field of cabbage have turned yellow, but will grow new leaves.

The Grey home on West Street has been sold, but the party has not arrived. The Bailey home that was injured by fire is being repaired by the new owner. The William H. Sanderson home has been sold to Frank Koeber. Several new babies have arrived since our last writing — Mrs. Charlotte Miller McChesney, Mrs. Marjorie Atkins Elliott, Mrs. Marjorie Felker Hutchings, and Mrs. Louis Toppan have become mothers. Expect we will have more to report in our next letter.

Mrs. King and Mrs. McLeod hear from their sons, Mrs. Lowe has had letters from Stuart Stiles, Carl Markert, and John Miazga, Mr. Atkins has had letters from Henry Messier, Fritz Capen, and Wilfred Judd, Cliff Tiffany and Richard Schoonmaker.



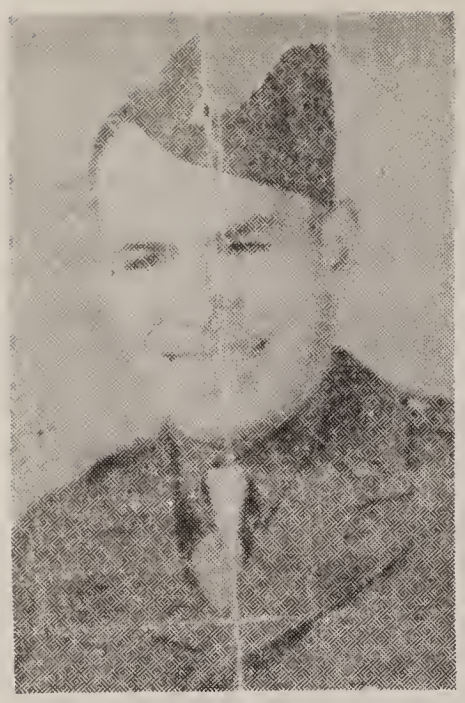
John Miazga, So. Amherst soldier in World War II, now in Colorado. (Jean Miazga, 165 Bay Rd.)

The school children are advertising a circus to take place on June 2. We do not guess there will be many tight rope walkers! The ladies are laying plans for a community auction and asking for all kinds of articles from the attic to the cellar. The Youth Hostel are asking for help, both labor and money, to complete the remodeling of rooms for their accommodations at the Hutchings home.

I dropped in at the dance Wednesday night and found the room well filled. There I met John Hutchings, who is stationed in Kentucky, and his wife.

There is a very general call for people to meet in their various churches on the evening of the invasion to pray for the boys on the front. Our prayers go out every day for you all, in whatever position you may be, that you will given courage and strength for each day's duty.

Committee of the Home Folks, South Congregational Church



John Hutchings, third brother serving in the Army. (Mrs. Herbert Hutchings)

Amherst, Massachusetts
June 24, 1944

Greetings,

Today is the 24th day of June — and a rainy one. The month of May was very dry, lawns were turning brown. This week we had rain Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and now a southeast downpour, all day. One big pond of three acres can be seen on Atkins' farm in the pasture.

Since our last, Mrs. Chauncey Simmons has given birth to a son. Two Newfoundland boys have come into South Amherst to work — one at Chauncey Simmons' and one at Roland Hebert's. There is also one at Joe Cook's in Hadley.

The freeze I spoke of in our last took most of the apples out of South Amherst. On high ground there are some — Atkins, Schoonmaker, and Hutchings have a few on top of the hill. Mr. Critchett has some on high ground. We expect peaches on the hill and can only wish the 44 South Amherst men were here to get a bite.

The auction to come July 6 for the benefit of the treasury of the Ladies' Benevolent Society is taking up much of our attention. Mrs. Atkins is doing the soliciting, the public giving, and the other fellow the buying. We have radios, toasters, dishes, glassware, antiques, 1854 hand corn planter, lawn chairs, books, doll carriage, dolls, all dressed in new clothes, dolls that shut their eyes when lying down, games, one sleigh, the old Post Office boxes that were in the old brick store, old shot pouch full of shot, carpet loom, bird cages, and many other things to make the buyer happy. I must add our livestock to be sold, one 8-week pig, one heifer calf, three puppies, two rabbits, and two fat hens.

We had a dinner today after church, many of the little folks were there with their parents. Rev. Mr. Toppan takes a trip to a Rural Church Conference at Old Orchard Beach, Maine, this week. Mrs. Marjorie Hutchings is taking a trip south to see Herbert who expects to be shipped across very soon. Schools are closed and the young folks are picking up jobs to keep them busy. Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts meet regularly at the library. Dances are held every Wednesday evening and are well attended.

Mr. Poor on Shays Street has built a swimming pool just west of his house and private roadway across the field down to where Frank Koeber lived. Frank has moved into what was William Sanderson's house and is making repairs to the barn.

Philip Ives, wife, and child have moved down from town into his father's house. Mrs. Sanderson has moved to Hallock Street, Amherst. Donald King mailed a letter home from Africa the 13th and it got here on the 17th. We think that was pretty quick time.

Jack Schoonmaker and wife had a son born to them the 26th day of June. Marjorie Atkins Elliott will come to South Amherst with her baby the third of July for a year or more while her husband goes to Greece in rehabilitation work.

Lightning struck the South Amherst school house the 23rd of June. Lightning went down the chimney, blew the furnace door open and knocked the janitor down. . .

We guess this is about all for this time. Best of luck to each one that reads this letter.

Committee of the Home Folks



Boys planting potatoes for Win Shumway at Potwine Lane field, circa 1921. L. to R.: Bill McKeeman, Ronnie Tyburski, Duane Smith, Jr., Fred McKeeman (deceased), Frank Koeber, Jr., Marian Shumway at his feet, Bobby Holt (deceased). Dave Goodrich with horse to left. (Win Shumway)



Harold "Dusty" Wentworth, son of Henry Wentworth, and nephew of Wes Wentworth. Picture 1944. (Ed Wentworth)

Amherst, Mass.
July 25, 1944

To the service men - Greetings:

It is the 25th day of July, 1944. The weather is pleasant and warm - a light shower last night, no real rain for over a month. Lawns are turning brown again. Most people are through haying. The Boy Scouts are taking their turns to spend a week or two at their camp in Chesterfield. Bill Atkins is trying to enlist some small boys to weed turnips which he has on the Adams lot. The weeds seem to grow faster than the turnips. Sweet corn is being picked, there is a good infestation of corn worm in the ears which some of the public object to buying -they ought to be willing to take the meat as there is no charge for it!

The auction I wrote about in our June letter came off on schedule. It was a pleasant cool evening. We started at 6:30 and finished at 10:30. The calf sold for $10, one pig for $8 to Mrs. Roland Coe, and one to Winfred Cowles for $5. Two hens brought $1.25 each and two rabbits at $.90 each. Food sale was humdinger: doughnuts at 50 and 60¢ a dozen, cake at $1; a sale of soft drink at 10¢ per bottle netted $15. Food sale netted about $60. Total net returns were $423.

South Amherst is the home of another baby boy born to Mrs. Howard Atkins on the 12th of July. Charles Thompson has married and brought his bride to South Amherst, at present living with his people. George Ross married a Vermont girl and is building a home on the Ross farm in North Belchertown. George has three brothers at sea in the U.S. service. Ernest Colin, who once lived in So. Amherst as a boy in the homes of W. H. Atkins, and Harold Wentworth, called on us one day last month. He is Captain of a Victory boat.

We had thunder showers and a little rain last week, with high wind. A small tornado at Mill Valley laid corn flat and blew down a tree, and a roof off from a barn. At Camp Anderson, Lake Wyola, two tents were torn from their stakes and made useless. The 50 boys encamped there had left for home before the storm, and the girls had not arrived. The committee in charge borrowed another large tent from the Army in Boston, so the girls' camp was able to set up for their outing.

We receive some interesting letters from you boys. Fritz Capen writes, "Received your letter today and was more than glad to hear from you." From Herbert Hutchings, "That one page really carries a lot of home, here into our barracks. It's a little piece of South Amherst transplanted to us through the thoughtfulness of our neighbors far away . . . I guess the boys that used to run around Atkins barn are pretty well spread over the world and you can bet they appreciate the greetings from the home town, the best community I know."

From Cliff Tiffany, "I appreciate your paper about things back home and the different people I know. I sure will appreciate home when I get back. One does not realize what home is until he is away for a long time. Again I want to thank you and the others that send me the letter."

From Donald Miller, c/o PM, New York: "Dear Mrs. Lowe and fellow letter writers, I enjoy the scenic beauty of this country, but of course it does not come up to the standards of the 'old home town' which you have so wonderfully described in your very interesting letters. Hope the time soon comes when writing won't be necessary, when everyone is back home - that will be a grand day. Your letters are greatly appreciated in this corner, no mistake, just hope they keep coming. Thanks loads."

Many of our men are overseas now. We have not yet heard of any casualty among our 44 from here. Whenever you change address please notify one of the committee.

May the days ahead be filled with courage for every one of you is our wish, and a safe return to the "Old Home Town."

Committee of the Home Folks

Amherst, Mass.
August 27, 1944

Greetings,

The time has arrived for us to get another letter off to our South Amherst men. We laid out a blue print, to write the letter by the 25th of each month, to get it typed and mailed by the first of the next month. Tonight is the 24th of August and a cool one at that. There were 10 days preceding the 18th that the thermometer ranged around 95°. Boss Atkins started his peach picking the 14th and finished the 21st. Peaches were all sold at the house — about 800 bushels — buyers coming in their automobiles. Earle Rhodes came two days to help care for the trade. All we lacked were a few of you fellows to enjoy the crop with us. Peaches were about $4.00 per bushel, and apples bring $2.00 to $2.50.

Wesley Wentworth has the upper floor of his storage full of government eggs. Raymond says they were inspected last week and found o.k. The only bad thing being where a broken egg leaked through the box and made things messy.

Just when we thought we should dry up entirely under intense heat and drought, a cloud burst Monday at 2 p.m. Strong winds blew down corn and tobacco. Rivers of water poured down the roadways. Another shower came Thursday the 17th that did the same. Lightning struck many buildings. One in North Amherst was set afire but was put out by the occupant. Two barns burned in Hadley.

We had a community picnic at the common in July. Had sports and a parade of Boy Scouts, Red Cross, baby carriages, saddle horses and one mule. A horseback race between John Tuttle and Charles Mosakiewicz was quite exciting. Buddy Wales had the mule who did a very good job for one of his kind. Tables were brought out and we sat about the tables, commented on the best looking baby, drank orange ade and chocolate milk. Ice cream was served without cost to the individual.

The next week following, a weekday Bible school was carried on by Rev. Toppan, Mrs. James Schoonmaker, and their helpers. This was from 9 to 12 for five days. One Sunday afternoon we saw what we took to be the mail carriers of Amherst having a picnic between the church and the library.

Speaking of picnics, Mrs. Atkins and I took a picnic lunch out on the recreation grounds at Greenfield while there for two days. They certainly have a swell place. You will get a good idea of it if you can imagine the river at Look Park being dammed and water set back 1,000 feet, not more than four or five feet deep anywhere, and a good sandy beach with ball grounds and swings.

One more baby has arrived in South Amherst, in the family of Richard Wales, since our last letter to you. When you boys get back we will get one or two dozen of them together to see how they compare with those you have trotted on your knees in foreign lands.

The Hutchings' Hostel is working. Fourteen were there one night and 65 have stopped there this summer. It really is quite a nice layout. Stairs go up in the middle of the ell, with a room to the right with 8 or 10 cots and one to the left with the same. Main floor has toilet room, stove, table, chairs, and lounges.



The Herbert Hutchings' hospitality extended from 1935 to 1955 to the many hostelers who stayed in the Ell at the left. (Barbara Tiffany, 1985)

Miss Julia Tiffany has bought the little house opposite Henry Stoughton that Russell Basara built. Archie French is living in the Bates house — opposite Stoughton's.

Tobacco men are all busy. Frank Mosakiewicz came over to help Stanley. Joe Kershlis went by with a load to night. Potatoes are being dug. Ted Critchett planted cucumbers to take the place of an apple crop and is busy picking them. Hubert Barton is to have an auction next week of some things he had stored. Mr. Coe, who bought his place has now bought the land opposite the house.

Last letter from Cliff Tiffany was mailed out of England. He said he wished he knew where Johnnie Allis might be. If Johnnie reads this, write back to us your address. James Sanders was home last week to see his mother who was very sick and died while he was here. We have not yet heard of any loss among the South Amherst men. Roger Smith writes that he appreciates the monthly letter we are sending out. Another letter from Herbert Hutchings with a new address, saying "I am sending this in plenty of time because I would not want to miss an issue of the news of South Amherst." He reports "Mosquitoes are as thick as South Amherst apples in a good year."

Arrangements are being made for a kindergarten school this fall in the Library room. Expect there might be eight or ten pupils. Mrs. John Leslie of West Street will be the teacher. The school committee are asking the selectmen to call a special town meeting on the 18th to appropriate money to take care of an increase in the payroll of the school teachers. Selectman Pray is in Dickinson Hospital under an operation for appendicitis and gall bladder. He will not be back on the job for some weeks. Prof. Fraker of the State College is chairman of the Rehabilitation Committee and is in charge of reemployment of returned men. Lester Rhodes returned Friday to camp after a two-week furlough.

Ignas Mosakiewicz was home in July and wrote back August 6 saying "it was good to go down South East Street, the old familiar road." He seems to think the wind and rain storms are worse in Arkansas than in Amherst. He calls them "wicked." He signs himself, "Just a soldier from the old home town."



Two Mosakewicz brothers, Ignas (Eugene) in the Army and Walter J. (Navy) symbolize the cooperation of the branches of the military by a handshake, on a home furlough. Mosakewicz barn in the background. (Mrs. Helen Mosakewicz Buczala).



A crew of friends who worked for W. H. Atkins; one year got the hay in on the 4th so had the 5th off for holiday. L. to R.: Cliff Tiffany, Jr. (a later soldier); Lester Rhodes, who in 1944 returned home on furlough; Elliott Thornton (also saw service); Earle Rhodes; Joe Messier; Cliff Tiffany, Sr. and George Corey, relative of Tiffanys. Cliff, Sr. and Joe Messier were lifetime employees. (Picture, July 1940 from Earle Rhodes).

I forgot to say the lower story of the Apple Storage was filled with government potatoes this summer, but is now empty ready for apples. There will not be many out of South Amherst as most of the crop was frosted out. William Kershlis reports that 100 full time extra workers are needed to harvest a four thousand acre potato crop in Hampshire County.

If any of you men want to know the address of another, we will try to get it for you.

Best luck!

Your Committee of the Home Folks



The Amherst Cold Storage on West Street, capacity 50,000 bushels, the first of its kind in the vicinity. (R.C. Schoonmaker)

Amherst, Mass.
Sept. 28, 1944

Greetings to our boys in service!

We take our pen once more, after a night which gave us the first white frost of the season. It did little damage. What did the most was the hurricane we had on the 14th of September. It was much like the one in 1938 except the wind was from the northeast and did not blow quite as hard or at least did not blow over many trees. It was here in the night from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. When we got up in the morning the sky was clear and the stillness of the air did not suggest what had happened in the night. One elm in front of the church was blown over toward the parsonage and across the electric and telephone wires, which shut off our electricity for two days. This meant milking by hand, three milkings. Harold Wentworth had 25 cows to milk, Fred Kentfield of Amherst had 54, and I expect Mr. Harlow with 75 must have had some job if he did not have electricity. A small elm on the park at Amherst went down, one big elm limb lay across the road on Shays Street near E. G. Brown's, and several apple trees on Atkins hill were uprooted. The Boy Scouts were out notifying the people that a hurricane was coming and stayed on duty at Lymans', Stedmans', and other homes to carry messages — we thought Paul Revere had come when one of the boys rode by on a pony giving the warning.

A kindergarten has been established at the library where little folks can go and get away from mother's spankings. Mrs. John Leslie is the teacher. To date 14 children are attending.

The young people of Christian Endeavor have organized the "Club Norwottuck" with Mrs. A. S. Garrabrants as leader, to maintain at the library a recreational center on Saturday nights . . . Mrs. Toppan will head a Junior Christian Endeavor group composed of those in eighth and ninth grades.

Two new Boy Scouts joined the troop last week — Billy DeGowin and Stephen Wales. Mrs. Mattie Bolter has sold her farm to an out-of-town party and had an auction of personal property last Thursday. Mrs. A. S. Garrabrants has moved from the Judd farm to the Shea farm on Potwine Lane — opposite Irving Hendrick home.

Long gaps in letters received from you boys give the parents many anxious days. Henry Messier and Clifford Tiffany have been heard from recently after some lapse of time. I expect it is very difficult for you to find time or a place to write. We have not heard of any South Amherst casualties. Elliot Thornton of East Amherst called on us recently. He was wounded in the hand and leg. His twin brother was also wounded and is in a hospital in this country. Some of you know them.

Louis Miazga has dug the cellar for a house on West Street, but has difficulty in getting priority on lumber. The Apple Storage is taking in apples — some from as far away as Fitchburg. The wind blew off 80% of Macintosh and 25% of Baldwin not picked throughout the state. We were about one-half through picking the Macs when the wind came. We picked up and sold nearly 1,000 bushel at the house. It is said that Roger Peck of Greenfield who has large orchards let people in the orchard and sold 1,500 bushel in one day. We have started today to pick what Baldwins we have which are on top of our hill.



The Mattie Bolter house (Geo. Bolter), 891 Bay Rd., circa 1780, purchased in 1940 from Salvatore Vasquez by Betty Bourgeois and her parents, George McIntire and his wife. (G. McIntire)

C. J. King drives the school bus. Charles Backe is janitor of the library and mows the common and cemetery. The Hutchings' Hostel is still open and doing business. Shays Street and Pomeroy Lane are getting a coat of oil. I see by the paper that Peter Rak who is in France has been wounded, but we do not know the particulars. His father and brother have put in new cement foundation and cow stable to the barn.



The G. Bolter house restored by Elizabeth Bourgeois. Her parents operated a greenhouse east of this house, living by choice in an annex to it. (Peter Couch saw a building moved on a sled in 1900 and joined to the house and carriage shed. It just fit!) (M. Elliott)

A girls' camp in Cummington of 70 girls has picked 7,000 bushels of beans for a grower in that town. A large group of Smith College girls went out to pick up apples over in Williamsburg after the blow. A group of girls stationed in Amherst has worked in tent tobacco this summer being transported by bus to South Deerfield. The eggs in the Apple Storage are being moved out (not with all the smell) to a canning factory in Boston.

A meeting called by the County Extension Service of leading agriculturalists last night at Northampton was well attended, to consider what could be done to assist any of you who wish to take up farming on your return to civilian life. The outlook for farmers after the war was considered, and a committee of three appointed as an advisory board to those who wish to enter farm life.

Try to keep in touch with us in any change of address. Best of luck to all of you who are doing the hard job. Your home folks are not forgetting you.

Your Committee of the Home Folks

Amherst, Mass.
October 26, 1944

To our servicemen at home and abroad -

By this time I think you have guessed who is the writer of most of these letters. This letter is taken to Rev. Toppan where Mary Jane Stedman types it and runs off the copies for the committee to send out. Each member has been allotted twelve names. The addresses have to be checked each month by getting in contact with some member of the family in which the soldier man lives.

Mrs. MacLeod received a letter this month from Frank Jenks saying he with 24 hours' leave at New York came home on a surprise visit which proved to be on his mother's birthday. Another letter from Royal Ives, in California, says he has been in the South Pacific for 18 months. He signs himself "a true son of South Amherst." Herbert Hutchings has been with us on a furlough for a few days, getting his first glimpse of his little daughter. Fritz Capen was home last week and I understand put some electric wiring in for his mother. Bradlee Gage is home for a few days. Home is something you can all look forward to, knowing there is a "welcome home" for everyone of you by all of the community.



Royal Ives, Navy fireman third class, served on destroyer "Philip" in Pacific theater. Deceased. (P.T. Ives)

Little Johnnie Schoonmaker was taken down with infantile paralysis about one month ago. The trouble is in his legs. Doctor specialists give hope of his recovery from the effect of the paralysis. Kindergarten school was closed one week when the case of paralysis came to light, but has gotten underway again as no new cases developed.

The Kindergarten Committee is giving a social and dance at the Library tonight for the benefit of the treasury. I have bought two tickets and you can guess how much dancing the Mrs. and I will do! Boy Scouts meet at the Library each week. Last week Saturday they got saws and axes with which they trimmed out and sawed up into four-foot lengths the elm tree that was blown down on the common in the gale of a month ago. By the way, I read that Hail Insurance Companies paid out $3,500,000 insurance money on fruit and tobacco losses of last year. Speaking of losses, I went over in my mind the fire losses in South Amherst the past 50 years and I can recall thirty-three buildings burned and several that got well started, which included Tufts', Davenports', and MacLeods'. The Baptist church caught fire from an overheated furnace last week. It was struck by lightning a few years ago and came near burning. Both times it was well "baptized" with water which seemed very appropriate.

Ingenious Traffic Speed Control Tried Out at Hadley Underpass



Upper: State Traffic Engineer E. F. Copell explains his new underpass speed control to town officials. Left to right: F. C. Pray, chairman of the Amherst selectmen; Engineer Copell, W. H. Atkins of the Amherst selectmen, and Edmund Smith, chairman of the Hadley board of selectmen. Lower: General view of underpass at Flaherty's crossing on Hadley-Amherst road.

Effort to reduce traffic hazard at Flaherty's Crossing on Hadley-Amherst Road, today's Route 9. This crossing was referred to by Hadley settlers as the entrance to New Swamp. Four college students (from Amherst and Smith Colleges) were killed at this railroad underpass in the fall of 1944. The Boston-Maine railroad has since been eliminated.

Jack Schoonmaker is building a two-story hen house on the site of the one that was burned last spring, but I understand much larger. Not many turkeys in South Amherst, but the Selectmen were called upon to assess dog damage in chasing and killing a bird in a flock of 1,000 at East Amherst. The owner will want to watch for something different from dogs about a week before Thanksgiving; I should guess, or he might have two-legged visitors instead of four!

Two serious automobile accidents occurred on the Northampton Road recently. One near the Rose Garden at which a man waiting for the bus was crowded by the collision of two cars and had to have a leg amputated. The other accident involved a large sedan holding four couples and driver which ran into the stone abutment at Flaherty's Crossing, or underpass, at Hadley. The girls were Smith girls and the boys from Amherst College. The driver was returning the girls to Smith College. Four were killed outright, four seriously injured, the driver not seriously, and the press says he has entered the U.S. Service from which he had been temporarily deferred.

To turn from the sad side of life and the dangers that surround us every day, we will get back to the farm. This fall we have seen and used a new type of farm machinery — at least new to South Amherst. It is a corn picker and husker. It is much like a regular corn harvester, but strips the ears off from the stalk and then passes the ear through a picker and on into a truck or wagon. Carl Markert's father owns the machine and has worked out with it. By the way, Carl was home not too many weeks ago and we saw him at the church.

Jack Schoonmaker brought an electric fly killer into our yard a month ago. This we established in the cow barn. It has a framework about 12" x 20", strung with wires one quarter of an inch apart. These are electrified. When the fly sits down he is electrocuted and drops into a box underneath.



Carl Markert, home from the service, pictured with his brothers, Richard, Ernest, Herman ("Sonny"), Edward, Walter and sister, Ruth. (Carl Markert)

Harold Wentworth who moved from his old place to Mr. Sauer's farm last spring, had an auction of surplus tools and stock last week at the old farm. The house is now receiving a coat of paint. I notice Fred Adams and helper are putting a coat of paint on W. H. Davenport's house. I expect the coats are to keep the houses warm through the winter. Speaking of winter, I wonder how the swans will fare in the duck pond made by Mr. Poor on Plum Brook. They will probably go into a shelter he has for them, and go skating daytimes instead of swimming.

The Trustees of the church put on a chicken pie supper last week served in the vestry of the church to two hundred and fifty. Some uneasiness was caused to those in charge when one big fuse blew out at 6:30 putting the place in semi-darkness. However, candles were substituted for electricity for a little until a "runner" went over to Howard Atkins' and got a new fuse. A little later one of the small fuses blew out, but was soon renewed. . .

Winter is fast coming — the leaves have fallen from the maples and are being raked from the lawns and the park in Amherst. Flowering plants that need to be housed are brought in and dahlia bulbs dug. Water tanks and pipes for



A team effort in gathering leaves in the fall.

summer use are being drained. Alcohol in the automobiles and tractors must be substituted for water or expect a cracked cylinder head. Storm windows are being brought out and put in place for cold protection, - so we prepare for winter in the old home town.

Sometime, not too far distant, we will have you with us to enjoy the good old winter, and help in the spring to shift back to summer. Best luck to all!

Committee of Home Folks

Amherst, Mass.
November 23, 1944

Greetings!

Today is the 23rd of November which we are celebrating as Thanksgiving Day. This letter will be in two parts: first that of the news of the day, followed by a personal letter to you boys from Mrs. King who has two boys in the war and can give each one of you a touch of mother love. Now for the news.

Mrs. Hollis Moore of West Street gave birth to a boy on October 30. This is all we have to show for new babies. However, we have had a new family to us move into the large house just the other side of the cement bridge on the way to Amherst. The name is Towson. They have one son in the service and a daughter at home. The family has been down to church and the daughter has sung in the choir.



James Towson of Mill Valley and Gerry Wilson, army friend, (Pennsylvania) in Tottingham, England. (James Towson)

The attendance at our church service one Sunday in November included five men who would have been seen there fifty years ago. You will recognize the names of Howlett, Walter Hayward, Alfred Goodale, W. H. Atkins. The fifth was Carey Hayward of Pittsfield who was born where Brainard Lyman now lives. Mr. Hayward had the first safety bicycle that came into South Amherst which cost $150. It had cushion rubber tires and weighed close to 50 pounds. Mr. Hayward's father had a shop by the pond and made wagons and sleds for sale to the hardware dealers.

We observed Laymen's Sunday in November. Herbert McChesney gave the sermon and a choir of men was gotten together to lead the singing.

The Week Day Religious Education is being carried on again this year. The Amherst Church Council hires the teachers who give the pupils of the 7th and 8th grades at Junior High an hour each week in religious education. An item that will interest some of you is that our church choir come down from their usual seats after the opening exercises to sit in the body of the church. An architect from Boston is coming this week Saturday to give suggestions as to relocation of the choir loft and the decoration of the church auditorium.

Hallowe'en came in spite of anyone who did not want it. The boys rang the bell and climbed the belfry. A buggy was resurrected from somewhere and left on Winfred Cowles' front lawn. Herbert Hutchings' dump cart was laboriously drawn up by my house with boy muscle and left in Mr. Schoonmaker's yard. An old wagon with other material was burned in front of the Dwight homestead. Oil cans, and a various assortment of waste tins and bottles were distributed along the lawns of the village. Thus passed Hallowe'en with boydom feeling that great victories had been won.

A social gathering of young people of high school age has been meeting once a week at the library auditorium for games and dancing. Rev. Toppan and Mrs. Garrabrants have sponsored this group known as the Club Norwottuck.

Snow arrived on November 16. About two inches of soft material which soon disappeared, but on the Berkshire hills it was 6 to 8 inches deep and caused a good deal of trouble on the highways. A chicken pie supper was served at Dwight Chapel on November 2. We understand it was well attended, necessitating the seating of second tables.



Dwight Chapel at Dwight Station, Belchertown.

We have had an election since my last. Massachusetts voted to return to annual elections for state officers. It is claimed that the change back to annual sessions will cost $750,000 for the extra year. There were several referendums on the ballot. The people voted "yes" right down the line. Voted to prohibit the playing of "Beano" for prizes throughout the state. Also that sick people may vote by the use of the absentee ballot. Voted for liquor of all kinds to be sold in Amherst. We now have two packages and five retail places licensed for the sale of hard liquors — which is all the law will allow to our population.

Our representative from this district to go to Boston has entered the Army. This will necessitate another election sometime in January to fill this vacancy. The Democrats got their man in as Governor, but the Republicans won out with a man for Lieutenant-Governor. Dr. Irvine Elliott, the husband of Marjorie Atkins, has arrived at Cairo, Egypt, on his way to Greece where he will work with the United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration. Marjorie and baby will stay in this country at her old home. Marjorie Felker Hutchings and baby are staying at the Davenport home while Herbert is off to war. Dr. Ives, who bought the Hulst farm, who has been serving in the Army Camp at Windsor, Connecticut, has been transferred to Colorado. His wife had an auction this month of all the farm tools and orchard equipment. We received a card of greeting from Henry Messier last week, who is in the South Pacific, otherwise no direct message from you except the King and MacLeod boys who write home.

Foxes have been seen down on the Depot Road and on the farm next to mine. In No. Belchertown a Ross boy has caught two. Quite a number of skunks and muskrats have been caught here by the regular trappers.

Our typist, Mary Jane Stedman, is going to Springfield to work next month. We only hope she will get around once a month to get these letters out for us. Now I will close with a cheerio and turn you to Mrs. King's letter which breathes out the mother love to each of you.

How is it with us? Well, butter is like gold nuggets in more than color this year — scarce and costly; cranberry sauce may be only a colorful memory at many a table; all-family parties are mostly "out" because no gas for pleasure driving is available; cotton material for mother's new house dress is a minus quantity, and as for sheets — well, if you don't manage to finish up this war pretty soon the ones we have will look like a real patch-work job. But, "so what" as one of you often remarks. Every day brings the end of the war closer; every day victory seems more assured; every letter and report from you boys telling us that you are "well" or "all right" releases a mightly flood of the kind of Thanksgiving which has nothing to do with turkey and pie and nuts and fruit, and is in season any day of the year.

You see, I happen to be the proud mother of a certain two of you lads in uniform, and that uniform you are wearing these days, in one sense, makes you all brothers. Consequently, in one sense, you all are my boys, so can't you see how all puffed up with pride I am when I establish a claim on all the thirty or forty of you South Amherst boys, and part you are doing to hasten the day of PEACE and that grand day when you will be coming HOME.



Dr. Irvine Elliott in Egypt, winter 1944-45, delayed enroute to Greece by the "December Revolution" there.



*Sherwin King, Navy 1943, now 143 Mechanic St. Brother Donald also served. Mother and sister, Kathleen K. Hayes, were Amherst writers. Family descended from Geo. Nutting. (Hannah Whipple p. 90 **Nutting** book) reported Geo. Nutting shot last wild turkey on Mt. Holyoke in 1850's. (King)*



Mr. and Mrs. Herman Markert with a grandchild. They learned from Will Atkins, who delivered fruit to their Holyoke store in 1920, of a farm for sale on West St. (He had slept the night in the livery stable). Buying the place from Irving Hendricks, they developed a prime dairy and fruit farm. With Carl in service, his father sold the herd and kept the poultry. (Carl Markert)

Amherst, Mass.
December 26, 1944

Greetings:

It is the Christmas season when yearly our thoughts go out to our friends. Expressions of goodwill are given in various ways - a card to a friend, a doll or a rattle to a child, ties, stockings, handkerchiefs to the grown-up. To you so far away we write this letter of cheer and want you to know our thought goes out to you in all the tragedy of your life. May the God of all creation give you courage day by day.

Bradley Gage, John MacLeod, Jean Towson and Doris Cowles were at church last Sunday. Jean is a cadet nurse and Doris is leaving as an Army nurse within two or three weeks but does not know just where. There is a possibility someone of you may meet one or both.

Last month after the church supper the men did up the dishes while the women and youngsters repaired clothing and packed boxes for shipment to Greece.

Brainard Lyman has been to Chicago as a delegate from Hampshire County to a meeting of the American Farm Bureau. He reports that one day they were told to continue the present poultry program of production and the next day were told to cut down. Sum total of advice was zero. While in Greenfield we visited the Federal Division of Moth Control and saw the plane that was used in Pennsylvania this past summer to dust forests with D.D.T. Five pounds to the acre will kill every gypsy moth. Most of the material now made goes to the Armed Forces for pest control as you may know.

Mrs. Herbert Hutchings, Jr. is taking a trip to Texas to visit Herbert. Mr. Robert Schoonmaker who is troubled with arthritis has gone to Tucson, Arizona, for the winter, hoping the dry climate will be helpful. Mrs. Toppan's mother, Mrs. Jack, is spending the winter with the Toppan family.

The community Christmas celebration took place at the library as usual. The public school put on the program and Philip Ives acted as Santa Claus which of course greatly interested the smaller children. The kindergarten has their celebration one afternoon last week.



The John and Marilyn Cushing house (previously Albert Brace's and earlier Albert Wales, according to Clara Dwight), with "twelve over twelve" pane windows. House about 150 years old. Reported by Wes Wentworth to have been a "tea house" for college girls around 1920. (M.A. Elliott)

. . .We were called out one evening last week to hunt for a black pig in a black night. However, the black pig in the black night found her own way back to her companions which Frank Koeber had rounded up to take to market. Cecil Jewett's horse lay down in his stall one day last month and was unable to get up. The neighbors turned out to help the horse on his feet but his strength had left him. We understand that Mr. Hutchings came over and ended the old horse's suffering. Mr. Jewett is still living alone but comes over our way every day or two. He is past ninety years of age.



Old picture of Cecil Jewett and his horse, c. 1920. In the late '30s, the clip-clop of hooves meant it was Cecil and his horse approaching. (Alice Tiffany)

One of the big dormitories at Smith College was burned in December. Fire was discovered fifteen minutes after the house was closed for the night. A housemaid trapped on the fourth floor was taken down on the aerial ladder. Easthampton, Holyoke and Greenfield fire departments were called to assist.

William Kershlis has bought a strip of land adjoining his north line. Albert Brace has moved to the little house at the corner of Middle Street and Bay Road. The Canning Plant has a new coat of shingles.

Skating on Atkins' pond has been good but the light snow yesterday will spoil the fun. Very little snow in South Amherst. To the west in Pittsfield and Albany heavy snows have fallen. We have in our notes a mention of a big rain on November 30 that put all lowlands under water. Some of that rain fell as snow in the western part of Massachusetts.

The U.S.O. of Amherst called for a hemlock Christmas tree from the woods down by the railroad. This was cut and the paper reports of the Christmas party held at the U.S.O. headquarters. The Episcopal church furnish their parish house, which is well patronized by the military at the colleges.

Sunday night was celebrated in South Amherst by the young people's going out carol singing. Mr. MacLeod furnished the truck and Mr. Toppan was chauffeur. When they reached the Bay Road the gasoline gave out. A hurry call was sent for gas; this being supplied they went on their way to Mr. Arthur Towson's at South Pleasant Street where they had been invited to have refreshments. After this a trip to Amherst Center where they sang carols, making a stop at Mr. W. H. Sanderson's.

Just two other items are that mumps got into the Cowles and Kentfield families; however, we have not heard of any other cases, and that the Boy Scouts will canvass South Amherst for collection of paper salvage this week Saturday.

And now . . . Mrs. King:

"Christmas cheer to you South Amherst boys in uniform wherever you may be on December 25 of this year! . . .

"You, this Christmas, are giving - and each of you alone knows at what cost - something far more important than any tangible offering. Multiply by millions the courage, bravery, loyalty and sacrifice of your own experience; then add to that the powerful force of heartfelt giving by every worthy member of the home front and be proud to have a part in this unprecedented Christmas season of 1944.

"Bill Barton sends back his corrected address and says, "This is my way of saying thanks for the newsletter. My best to you and all the South Amherst folks". Don King recently transferred from North Africa to Italy, writes, "We are camping in a pine grove — am already feeling better in this colder climate - food here much better — it's good to see some green grass and some mountains more like those at home — your letters are a big help."

And so ends our letter to you with all the love and friendship we know how to express.

Amherst, Mass.
January 25, 1945

Greetings to our service men:

The opening topic of conversation nowadays is the weather. We have had several snow storms this month. The traveled ways are a white floor with banks of snow rolled up on either side by the plows of the town. Two cars slid off the road in front of the Canning Plant, but did not tip over. A town truck pulled one out and a neighbor's tractor the other. A truck stalled in a drift by Schoonmaker's was left until town plows dug it out. The wind blew from the northwest all last night and drifted some snow in by Schoonmaker's as well as down by Cowles'. The town snow plows got out at 9:00 p.m. and stayed on the job all night. This morning the temperature was 10 below zero and all water pipes in the henery were frozen. It is just zero as we write this.



Bill Barton, who narrowly survived the Battle of the Bulge, Hugh Barton's son, now an architect. (Betty Barton Cramer)



Fort Juniper, "always green, always warming." The home of Amherst's beloved poet, Robert Francis, author of The Sound I Listened For, *1945. (See poetry section for other titles. M. Elliott, Spring 1984)*

Professor Cole stated before a group of farmers at Northampton yesterday that the snows with the cold weather had impeded rail traffic so that at one time there were 10 train loads of grain side-tracked between Chicago and Buffalo, and there was much delay in getting grain through to Massachusetts. Hay is short and is being brought in from as far away as Colorado and Arizona.

A lot of zero weather has been sandwiched in with the other happenings. In spite of this, baby chicks are being hatched and some brooder houses have been occupied this last month. John Schoonmaker reports that he has orders for forty thousand or more to come out of his hatchery this spring. It will be an interesting sight to see them march out for their first morning breakfast.

The Boy Scouts went out last Saturday and gathered in between two and three tons of salvage paper which netted them about twenty-five dollars.



Postcard picture of Amherst Common under lights on a snowy light. 1929. (Ruth Curtis)

Two books have come to our attention in connection with two South Amherst authors. One, by Robert Francis entitled "The Sound I Listened For", published by McMillan Company, is of such interest that the Navy has placed an order for more than a thousand copies. One of equal interest and published by the New York Times is entitled, "The War in Maps" and has the name of Francis Brown as author, son of E. G. Brown of West Street. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Brown, also of West Street, have moved to San Diego, California, for Mr. Brown's health. Their son, Wendell Brown, is in the military at Temple University Medical School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

It is pretty severe weather for wild life, both birds and animals. Pheasants are finding it difficult to get along even if they do at all. Foxes and winter weather take their toll of these birds. A picture of twelve fox skins was displayed in a local paper this month, the results of a Hockanum trapper's effort to rid the farms of this serious enemy of the pheasants. Two grey squirrels were seen this morning on the college campus hopping along across the road leaving their footprints in the snow. By the way, the minister gave us a sermonette Sunday on "Footprints in the snow". As the animal leaves its trail in the snow, so we human beings leave a trail for good or evil as we travel life's road.

Fritz Capen came home three weeks ago, married a Belchertown girl and is now taking further training in advance fire control at Washington, D.C. Christmas cards came from Royal Ives and Lester Rhodes. James Towson, Wendell Brown and William Tague have been added to our mailing list of service men.

Amherst College will close out the military training next month but the State College will continue the instruction. They both are low on civilian students. State College which once had 1,000 men and 300 women civilian students now has 200 men and 600 women. Amherst College which used to carry a student body of 600 now has 120.

Peter Coe, son of Roland Coe the "Boy Scout cartoonist" for the Saturday Evening Post, had a birthday party this month with neighborhood youngsters to help him celebrate. Richard Wales, Jr., was promised a Shetland pony for Christmas if he would be a good boy; as we see him out on the pony's back we assume he was a good boy.

Miss Ruth Hoye, teacher of the primary grade at the South Amherst School, gave up her work the first of the month because of an attack of appendicitis. Mrs. Helen Littlefield is substituting. Mumps have run their course from the young child to a lady of ninety years who fortunately is recovering from the disease.

Something almost as bad as mumps is the income tax. We do not mind paying the bill which helps the war along, but the mental tax is no small strain. To add Item A to Item B, substract Item D from this result and then add this to the unknown quantity X is too much for one out of high school fifty years. Most of us just give up and go down to Judson Gouger and have him fix us up.

Brainard Lyman stops at the grade school here at the Green every Tuesday and sells war stamps. it is reported to us that this has amounted to about $50.

A fire at Henry Bilger's, South East Street, January 10, at 2:00 p.m. destroyed the barn and silos and got a good start on the house. Part of a good herd of Holstein cows was saved but some were so badly burned that they had to be killed.

Mrs. W. J. McKeeman has the work of taking the annual census of the people which includes their sex, age, and occupation. When this is done, we will have a good checkup on all of you servicemen and know if we have missed any.

Now we will close this January letter of news with all the friendship and appreciation we know how to give to you, and turn to the mid-winter message from Mrs. King:

Looking out over the landscape today, bordered by the rugged rim of old Mt. Norwottuck, the one word contrast seems to come alive between the scene and the picture seen from the same view-point last summer when looking down across the Shumway, Cowles, Cook and Schoonmaker acres to the Atkins hill. . .

. . . Never yet has the cold grip of winter been able to resist the up-surging awakening life of springtime. A new meaning -almost a halo of glory - arises from the familiar words of freedom, justice, health and happiness after a face-to-face contact with tyranny, brutality, degradation and misery. One of you has already written home about the "stamp of fascism on human faces", and the "filth and treachery of the Arabs", saying that "it is not a good thing to see", and continuing "repeatedly I thank God that I was born and raised in America". American soldiers are sharing their rations and scant luxuries with starving children. A boy who lost 20 pounds in weight on the way home from New Guinea said, "Well, . . . food was scarce there, so we left most of it for the poor guys who could not come home". Uncounted deeds of heroism and bravery are daily being done by boys hitherto unaware of what was "within themselves". Home cooking and clean sheets will seem more precious than gold, to some of you, when you get home. . .

. . . Hold fast, boys, and believe with us that "Earth will look up and smile again, after the thunder and the rain".

Committee of the Home Folks

South Amherst, Mass.
February 22, 1945

Greetings to Our Servicemen:

We are starting this letter on Washington's Birthday and what a day! Rain fell last night in a freezing temperature that covered the trees with crystal ice. Continued rain at a 34 degree temperature is melting the ice today. All low places in the highway are ponds of water hemmed in by the snow banks.

To go back to the beginning of the month we report a fire on February 4 at the Baptist Church. This did not prove too serious as it was detected at an early stage although it had got well started from an overheated furnace. This is the third time in a year that the Baptist Church has had a fire which might have taken from our town one of the old landmarks. On February 7 the Tool and Mechanics Building at Smith Agriculture School in Northampton was burned at a loss of $200,000. The Amherst Fire Department was called over to assist the Northampton men. On February 8 the house of Bert Lovett on the Mountain Road caught fire on the outside of the building, by a flash from the transformer in the street. The fire department responded to call and the damage was little.

A pleasant neighborhood excitement was caused when two riderless horses were seen, evidently in search of new pastures, galloping down the road one day this month. The owners, some young people of North Belchertown, found them that night calmly eating from Earl Wales' stack of hay.

The Judds have their 10 brooder houses filled with 2,500 chickens. It has required a tractor snowplow several times to open the road for transporting grain and wood to the brooder houses on the hill.

There is much shortage of hay in the New England district. Hay sells as high as $50 per ton; grain about $60 per ton. The Governor of the State has arranged for 100 cars of hay to come into the State in the next 10 days.

Louis Miazga sold his land on West Street to his neighbor, Ralph Crocker, and bought a place on East Main Street, Amherst, where he will keep poultry. Mr. Crocker came to Amherst recently and bought the D. I. Smith farm on West Street.

Eddie Wentworth, who was honorably discharged from the Army a few months ago, has gone to Honolulu to work for the United States Government. Robert Francis, similarly discharged two years ago, has a position as instructor in English at Mt. Holyoke College.

Sixty men arrived at Mass. State College in Amherst Jan. 31 for pre-induction training. Five hundred have completed this training since July 4.

Homer Cowles who had mumps two months ago now has scarlet fever. No other cases in South Amherst that we know of.

Nicholas Rocco, custodian of the Poor Estate, has been appointed Scoutmaster of Troop 502. We are fortunate in having Mr. Rocco who is a veteran of seventeen years of Scouting, twelve of which he served as Scoutmaster. The Scouts are now meeting in the main auditorium of the Munson Memorial Library on Thursday evenings. Their service program this week calls for the collection of salvage paper and tin cans for war use. Mrs. Herbert Hutchings, Jr., has taken over the leadership of the Girl Scouts as Mrs. James Schoonmaker is unable to continue in the work. The girls are out this week gathering in the fats for the United States Government.

Mrs. Herbert Hutchings, Jr., with Diane, and Mrs. Marion Shumway Moon have taken an apartment in the house formerly owned by Truman Coe and now fitted into apartments by Robert Stiles.

A long letter came this week from the Rev. Leland Hunt who is now stationed as chaplain somewhere in Burma. His wife and daughter are in Farmington, Maine, where Mrs. Hunt is an instructor in a teachers' college. Mrs. Lowe reports receiving a letter from Wendell Brown. We have also heard from Fritz Capen. We expect you are getting the high school newsletter which gives full information where many of you are located.



The Kentfield, Hutchings and H. Atkins farm buildings from the lower Atkins meadows. Mt. Norwottuck rises over top of Hutchings' Hill. 1969. (M.A. Elliott)

Roger Smith is the father of a son. Mrs. Smith and boy are living at her former home in South Hadley. Mr. and Mrs. Doric Alviani are parents of a daughter.

The rain last night and today of an inch was largely absorbed by the snow; still there was enough to seep through and make a pond on Atkins' pasture. We observed some water running on top of the ice at Mill River. Sugar season is right here and maple trees will be tapped next week by those who may have the trees. Maple syrup presented to you on some of this snow we have been talking about would make you think of the Old Home Town. We wish there was some way to do this.

The birds have had a hard time this winter with all vegetation covered. We saw three blue jays picking away at crusts of bread yesterday. It was interesting to see them standing on the crusts to hold the bread down while they picked their lunch. It will not be long now before the snow will disappear and bared patches of grass will appear. Both Bill Atkins and Win Shumway have had heat in their greenhouses the past month; cabbage plants are up and being transplanted, beets are coming and tomatoes will be along on the home stretch. Yes, spring is here and we agree with Mrs. King who says:

. . . The sub-zero weather, deep snow and bright sunshine of Candlemas day assured us that February was living up to its reputation as a hard month. Hardship seems to be the background of some of the greatest leaders we have known, among them Lincoln. . . .



Phil Stedman, on leave, with his wife, Virtue, at his mother's home (The Hiram Allen house), 1943. Note "bulkhead" cellar doors, characteristic of old homes in New England. (Early road swung south of house for approach to Shays St.) (Virtue Stedman)

. . . Our Service Men's Shrine, which is placed at the right of the organ in the church, was dedicated on the evening of February 4. A large group of your home folks and friends gathered quickly and quietly in the welcoming atmosphere of subdued light and the soft music of the church organ. Ex-Army chaplain, the Rev. Roy M. Pearson of the First Church, spoke with real feeling and high tribute to "those whom we honor tonight." Your names were read from the pulpit, were written in your Book of Honor, and this was placed on an altar between lighted candles. Above the altar hangs a beautiful silken flag bearing for each one of you a blue star on a background of pure white. At the top is one gold star for Leonard Parker, and the border is a vivid red with golden fringe below. Yes, son, your name is written there, and this is our pledge to you that "Love keeps an inn, and welcome home all those who walk outside."



Lester Rhodes in service with friend "Smitty." (Earl Rhodes)

We close with wholehearted friendship to you all, ever looking for the day that we may again be united on South Amherst soil.

Your Committee of the Home Folks



Norman G. McLeod and his family: Norman H., Allen, Betsy, Mrs. Marjorie and John. Allen and John were in the service. (McLeod)



Leonard Parker and his father at home in happier days. (Helen Parker deBruyn)



Lt. Leonard Parker, son of Sumner Parker, West St. Leonard was killed in an air crash in Egypt, the only serviceman lost from South Amherst. (Helen Parker deBruyn)

Amherst, Mass.
March 28, 1945

A Home Letter to the Service Men

Once again we take the pen and let our thoughts flow from its point; if we are as successful as the melting snows of the month were in discharging their waters there will be a flood of reading matter for you to enjoy. The waters of Hop Brook have been over the banks most of the month as the deep snows on Holyoke Range melted under the mild temperature. We sometimes wonder what gave the name "Hop" to this brook, but think it is suitable. A flock of wild ducks has been seen on its flooded waters enjoying the springtime.

The Connecticut River has behaved very well. She has several times threatened to go on a real sight-seeing trip over the meadows, but each time repented of her evil thoughts and did not get far from her home banks. The island above the Coolidge Bridge is still showing its head above the turbulent waters.

The town has given the politically minded the enjoyment of two caucuses, two elections and a town meeting in the last two months. For selectmen the present member of the board from South Amherst was reelected. Perhaps you will be able to guess his name. For a representative to the General Court Colonel Aplington of Amherst, substituting for A. E. Lumley who was called into the military last November. At the town meeting a committee was voted to be continued to study the school needs. A new building for the intermediate is being considered, in which event the use of Kellogg East and Kellogg West buildings would be granted to the high and junior high pupils. The need for this in the near future is caused by the increase in birth rate from an average of 88 ten years ago to 115 the last five years and up to 135 for 1944. South Amherst is credited with twelve of these future students.

This month we are pleased to report the birth of a son, Charles, Jr., to Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Thompson; a son, John Henry, to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Wentworth; a son, William Allen, to Mr. and Mrs. James Schoonmaker; a daughter, Judith Ann, to Mr. and Mrs. Archer French, and also of interest, a daughter, Shirley Ruth, to Esther Schoonmaker Pray who with her husband makes her home in West Springfield. The writer would not dare gamble on the 1945 crop but if this month is indicative we shall hold our quota for the year. We suggested in our last letter that we might begin to celebrate birthdays. The first one to come to our attention is that of six-year-old Johnnie Schoonmaker who had a delegation of his young friends give him a visit; the latest is an invitation from Alan T. Stedman who says, "Won't you and your Mom please come up here and help me celebrate my first year birthday?" We only wish that Alan's father who is over across and has never seen the little fellow could be here to enjoy the occasion, then it would be a celebration.

A recent event of interest was the marriage of Miss Bertha Rak, sister of Peter who is in the service, to Pvt. Mahlon Parsons of Southampton. Bertha's husband has completed his basic replacement training and will report to Fort Mead this week. Our best wishes go out to them and prayers for Mahlon's safe return to his bride.

Charles King, by the way a veteran of the Spanish War, has resigned from carrying school children and has sold his school bus to Winfred Shumway who will carry on. Mr. King has transported the pupils in this district for the past 24 years without any serious accident to the children, a record that is to be envied in these days of motor driving. We shall miss Mr. King as new hands take hold of the wheel but our appreciation will go out to the one who has so faithfully and well served the community.

Mrs. Gardner Black, who has been the teacher of the intermediate grades for the past two years, has resigned to be with her husband, a marine who is stationed in North Carolina.

Mrs. James Tufts who took a course in Nurse's Aide Training at Northampton is now giving six hours a week in service at the Dickinson Hospital. There are others from Amherst that do this but Mrs. Tufts is the one credited to South Amherst.



Aerial view by Chas. Thayer (1984) of Mt. Pollux and neighborhood from the S.E. All but the crown of Hutchings' Hill (foreground) show development. Across the road two new neighbors, then road to the town well in Swamp. Torrey's, Tidlund's, Atkins' buildings, two houses then cold storage. On left (west) side, Hutchings', Tiffany's (Jewett), Dimocks' on brow, old Judd barn, Edwards'. Mt. Pollux now a park; pool with house, old Tiffany (Dickinson) house. Use magnifying glass! (C.V. Thayer, aerial, 1984)

Dr. Elliott, husband of Marjorie Atkins Elliott, reached Greece last week where he works under UNRRA in livestock rehabilitation.

Ignes Mosakewicz has been honorably discharged from the army and has returned home. John Philipowicz was inducted into service the 21st with a small group of other Amherst men.

Miss Julia Tiffany acting as nurse at the Clark School, Northampton, had a group of children over here on an outing last week.

Chauncey Simmons has been obliged to give up farming because of serious back trouble. He has stored his household goods and has moved with his wife and two children to Belchertown. His grandfather, U. G. Groff, has secured a man to take Chauncey's place and will try to carry on the dairy and poultry business for a time.

Miss Kate Judd has sold the 60-acre farm of the B. F. Judd Estate to Mathias Berglund of Springfield. Mr. Berglund is now working at the Bosch Magneto plant but will occupy his new home this spring. We are glad to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Berglund and their five-year-old son into our community life and trust their new home will meet all of their expectations.



The Berglund house (Waitstill Dickinson's in 1850's), 1110 S. East St., later H.W. Atkins', and in 1982, Allen Torry's. (Barbara Tiffany)

William R. Kershlis, labor coordinator for Hampshire Co. the past two years, has resigned and taken a position with the General Cigar Company of Hartford. His work has been to seek out help for the farmers from the colleges, schools and other sources. He was instrumental last year in arranging employment of Newfoundlanders and Jamaicans. He has done a one hundred percent job that is appreciated by the farmers of the county. Our best wishes go with him in his new position. L. J. Pelissier of Northampton, appointed to take the place of Mr. Kershlis, will have the full cooperation of the farmers he is serving.

The request of the U. S. Government for midnight curfew at all public gatherings in order to conserve fuel has been generally observed. The Grange which occupies the Munson Memorial Hall for its weekly dance voted to meet the request of the War Manpower Commission and close the dance at 11:45 that the doors may be closed at twelve.

Last week the red shop that was on the Pomeroy Estate left its home of many years and took a journey down South East Street to the property of Fred A. Colby where it will be converted into a home for young chicks.

The woodchucks are out and ready to gnaw the bark from the apple trees. We are getting some cartridges from the Wild Life Bureau of the Government with which to blast the holes, hoping the concussion will kill Mr. Woodchuck. Mice have done some injury to the trees eating the bark under the snow while rabbits have run about on top of the snow and done some damage to the exposed trunks.

A daughter, Sandra, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Jon Moon this morning. Mrs. Moon is the former Marian Shumway.

"The Hampshire Gazette" published our last letter in its daily the first of the month. We were pleased with the heading they gave the letter as "Odds and Ends of Village Life."

As ever from the ones at home.

Amherst, Massachusetts
April 24, 1945

Greetings from the Hometown:

A year ago, the 28th of April, we mailed you a letter in which we said, "Yesterday was the first real warm day, the thermometer getting up to 70 degrees." This year, March 27-30, the temperature averaged 80 degrees, and one day was 85. The mean temperature for March was 44 degrees against the normal of 34. An apricot tree at Charles Thayer's residence was in bloom on April 3. Pears and early apples were in bloom April 13. Lawns are green and are being mowed. All vegetation is a month ahead. Dr. Shaw of the State College said on the 19th that the fruit growers needed to walk on tip-toe for three weeks to come, for fear of a frost. Well, someone got careless and stepped down flat and brought a good freeze last night that wiped out all the plans for a fruit crop. The writer has lived in South Amherst 57 years and picked a crop of apples every year until the year of 1944 when a frost seriously cut the production. This year the freeze of the 23rd would seem to eliminate the chance of a crop this fall.

The next biggest thing of interest is the train wreck of yesterday. A freight on the Central Vermont Railroad was going south when, at a point directly east of the Bazara home, the second car behind the engine jumped the track, and after going some distance, buckled. The pressure of those behind caused a piling up of 24 of the 60 cars making up the train, pushing them into a heap two and three deep at all angles, smashing them like kindling wood. Fortunately no one was injured. We understand the two cars of grain were bought by some local farmers. The other consignments, such as lumber, newsprint, wire screens and the like, have been salvaged by the railroad to go on to their destination.



Elder's lumberyard at Central Vermont depot on Main St., idle since the demise of the railroad. (Elliott 1973)

Boy Scouts have been active since our last letter, gathering in a large quantity of salvage paper for the war effort. Friday night was Charter Night for Troop 502, when they met in vestry of the church for a supper with their friends. A program featuring the council fire and a candlelight service followed later in the evening.

At the annual meeting of the local district of the New England Milk Producers Association, James Tufts was elected president for the 25th consecutive year.

Grass fires have been numerous, several occurring in the Pansy Park district, along the Central Vermont Railroad, necessitating calling out of the Belchertown, Amherst, and Amherst College Fire Departments.

Wildlife has enjoyed the early spring. The writer has seen five deer in the early morning, crossing the lower branch of Bay Road. They made an attractive sight as they bounded across the field, their tails representing great white plumes. Rabbits, with their little stub tails, hopping over the road away from the approaching car; a grey squirrel out of his hiding to get the spring breezes; a cock pheasant covered with the most resplendent plumage of startling colors; the wild ducks by the roadside pond, proceeding to take wing for a more secluded spot; the partridge or quail slipping away through the underbrush; a lone crow winging his way, perhaps toward some distant cornfield; the blackbirds and robins on the lawns in search of a worm or some inviting morsel - all of these make us realize that spring is on its march among the wildlife of the old hometown.

John Hutchings stationed at Fort Knox, Ky., is receiving congratulations with Mrs. Hutchings on the birth of a son, born April 15. We are sorry not to have a larger calendar of births this month but we appreciate even one to enlarge our cradle roll of youngsters. The population of Amherst as reported by the census takers shows a count of over 7,000, a number having never before been reached. The great gain in births, spoken of in our last letter, exerted a large influence in putting the census number over the 7,000 mark.

Fred Colby of the Bay Road, a World War veteran, has been appointed sealer of weights and measures for the town. His job is to see that all weighing scales are accurate and measures are of approved size.

We do not have any farm sales to report this time but two families have changed the location of their homes. Charles Backe and family of Middle Street have moved into the home of Ralph Whitcomb of West Street; Richard Wales and family of South East Street, have moved into the house formerly occupied by the Backes.

Norman MacLeod, who is agent for the Mansville Insulation Company, is doing a much appreciated job of insulating the parsonage.

The Boston Post some years ago presented a gold-headed cane to the oldest man in Amherst. When the possessor of the cane died, it was to be passed on to the next oldest living man. Last week Daniel Coughlin of High Street, the last possessor of the cane, died at the age of 94. The cane will now go to Arthur Cecil Jewett of South Amherst, 92 years old, and the oldest man in town. Mr. Jewett was born in Pelham, October 26th, 1851, and will be 94 this fall. He came to South Amherst in 1890 living for a few years with his father and mother and Mrs. Sylvester Jewett. Since their death 40 years ago he has maintained a bachelor's hall without the interference of womankind. This record of life is encouragment to those who have not yet acquired feminine attachments. Mr. Jewett's stories of his boyhood life and adventure, filled with quaint humor, are of interest. He even slips in some stories of his winter sports life with the maidens of his day. The kindly friendship expressed by Mr. Jewett as he goes about the neighborhood is appreciated by all. We wish him many more years of health and happiness.



Cecil Jewett of 1459 S. East St. recipient in 1945 of the gold-headed cane as the oldest (92) man in Amherst. (Alice Tiffany)

In some of our letters we have mentioned the kindergarten which represents a much younger generation than Mr. Jewett. Perhaps you would be interested to know the names of the little scholars, most of whom were able to attend a party given by Merrilee Atkins this week. Allen Schoonmaker, Jackie Leslie, Eddie Brace, Johnnie Schoonmaker, Dickie Berglund, Dickie Wales, Charles-Edmund MacChesney, Sylvia Holt, Priscilla Goman, Jimmie Hannigan, Roberta Hebart, Peter Coe, Philip Kershlis and Mary Wentworth.

A national drive for the collection of clothing is underway this month. We are asked for an average of five pounds of clothing from each individual. The goal is 150,000,000 pounds from the entire country. The clothes will be shipped to the war-torn devastated countries and distributed without discrimination to the needy. South Amherst is being canvassed by 24 women. The clothing is brought to the church vestry where it is sorted and made ready for shipment under the supervision of Mrs. Emily Erickson.

The town people wish in some way to dedicate a memorial to you boys. It has been suggested by the selectmen that the playground now being developed on Triangle Street would be appropriate. There would be an opportunity for the citizens of the town to subscribe to special, designated memorials, such as the gate-way, children's pool, or tennis court.

Committee of the Home Folks

South Amherst, Mass.
May 25, 1945

Home News to our Servicemen,

Perhaps one of the most interesting items this month was the surprise party given to Mr. and Mrs. Charles King in recognition of their 40th wedding anniversary. A goodly number of their relatives as well as their neighbors made the occasion one to be remembered for its friendship and goodwill. Their two daughters, Kathleen and Frances, were able to be present but their two sons, Donald and Sherwin, who are overseas could not join in the festivities. However their wives, Mrs. Donald and Mrs. Sherwin King, were able to be with us and enjoy the occasion. To have lived and brought up four children of upstanding character is a credit to Mr. and Mrs. King. Mr. King, a Spanish war veteran, was postmaster and village storekeeper in the community many years. You boys will want to join with us in wishing the Kings many happy returns of the day.

These friendly celebrations beginning with a shower of gifts to the bride-to-be, baby outfits for a mother-to-be, and followed by birthday festivities for the little ones as well as their elders, are common occurrences in our village. Years move on to the observance of one anniversary after another culminating in and like this of Mr. and Mrs. King - making up an ideal progression of events in step with the march of time.

On the evening of May 7th, the day after the surrender of Germany, we met at the church that in company with others we might lift our hearts to God in thankfulness that one great step in this war had been completed. The next great step - and a long one - only partially taken - is across the Pacific. We prayed that each one of you might get hold of God's hand as it is reached out to you, to give you courage in the days to come; and we prayed that your homecoming might not be too far distant.

May 12th was set aside by President Truman as a day of prayer asking that the day might be hastened when peace would rule throughout the world. This day very appropriately was Mother's Day, a day more dear to you, far away from a mother's touch of sympathy and understanding than any one of us in the homeland can realize.

On May 6th nine young people were taken into the church, signifying their desire to be known as workers among God's people.

Repairs and redecorating within the parsonage are completed which add greatly to the comfort and convenience of the Toppans. Two electric lamps, one on either side of the front door to the church have been installed and one at the outside door to the kitchen. They will be appreciated and prevent many a tumble.

We were glad to welcome Robert Schoonmaker Sr. back to the hometown after a winter in Tucson, Arizona for better health. He found not only health, but an opportunity to teach mathematics to some selected youngsters.

William McKeeman enlisted in the Navy and left for camp the first of the month. The morning of his departure a breakfast was given in his honor and attended by 16 young people of his age.

Marjorie Atkins Elliott and son Kirk have gone to visit Kirk's grandparents in Ohio.

Marion Shumway Moon and daughter Sandy left the 21st for St. Louis, Missouri to be near Mr. Moon, (stationed at Keesler Field), and to visit with his parents.

Robert Hutchings and Carl Markert were home recently meeting their old friends.



Robert, the third Hutchings brother, joined the Navy, starting technical training. (Mrs.Herbert Hutchings)

Three doctors went into the war service from Amherst, Dr. Durgin, Dr. Holden and Dr. Clapp. Last week a new man, Dr. Gerald Hogan, opened an office on North Pleasant Street.

Jamaicans are being brought in from the island of Jamaica, as was done last year to work in the tobacco fields of the Connecticut Valley. The wind, rain and snow storm of May 10th did great damage to the tent tobacco fields. Whole fields of tents and poles went down with the weight of the snow. Many new poles had to be bought to replace the broken, and the nets had to be mended and rehung. The abnormal amount of rain since April 26th has caused much serious rotting of the seed potatoes already planted. A record of nine inches of rainfall between April 26th and May 20th is over double normal. The snow to which we referred was a mere half inch in South Amherst but on the hills to the west it reached the depth of six and eight inches -breaking down fruit trees, telegraph poles, and telephone wires. It was reported that 40 men depending on electricity for brooding and hatching suffered severely. The ground being so full of water, few potatoes and no corn have been planted as yet in South Amherst. Grass is far ahead of normal and will be ready to cut on June first.

Best laid plans often go awry - not due to the fault of anyone. One incident of interest to us was when we say 21 carloads of potatoes from Maine equaling 1,500 bushels sidetracked at the Boston-Maine depot. These were trucked to Amherst Apple Cold Storage, to be kept some weeks for future use. However a hurry call came from the U.S. Government the day the last car was being unloaded, to reload the cars and ship to Bayonne, New Jersey for shipment overseas The potatoes having eyes must have viewed all these changes with alarm and just wondered where their final resting place was to be. A similar feeling a brooder house must have had that was seen this week rolling by on wheels. We expect Ernest Markert saw to it that its final resting place was comfortable. Another odd one was a telephone call from a woman who had gone into the business of hatching chickens. Her biddy had brought forth one chick. She was looking to buy 12 more to put with the one that he might not be lonesome and could grow up in community life.



Atkins apple trees in bloom, probably at the "stump lot," Bay Road. (Fruit Bowl Collection)

On Friday the 18th of May the Young Peoples Societies arranged for the monthly supper at the church. About 125 people came together and remained for the entertainment which followed. Mr. McChesney was able to secure a sound movie which illustrated the building of the Alcan Highway. Another film showed the work of a Studebaker Weasel which proved to be a cletrack tractor capable of squirming itself into all sorts of positions to pull stumps, ford brooks, climb mountains, and to do the impossible in general. Perhaps you can tell us even more about them when your homecoming is no longer impossible - but a fact.

Now from Mrs. King: If you all could be home riding around South Amherst these days, whether up over Shays Street, out toward the Pelham Hills, down over the old Bay Road or up West Street, toward Amherst center, I'm sure you would agree that all the beauty and freshness with which Mother Nature has lavishly decked our whole community makes it a truly magnificent place in which to live in Maytime.

* * *

This month of May is rife with new hope and promise. It has brought us, according to Associated Press reports, one of the most eventful weeks in the history of mankind. "Sunday: death of Benito Mussolini. Tuesday: Germans announced the death of Adolf Hitler. Wednesday: Berlin falls; a million Germans surrender - Friday: more German armies in the north capitulate, and Norway is liberated." Then on the 7th we thrilled to the radio message, "The Allied Nations announce the unconditional surrender of Germany." The long looked-for V-E Day at last a fact; and the Golden Gate Peace Conference is well under way. One reporter says, "Our rejoicing over V-E Day should be tempered with the realization that a mighty work remains to be done, but we have made a magnificent start, and there's no reason for discouragement over the size of the task."

Your Committee for the Home Friends

To our Amherst Servicemen,

At this date of writing perhaps the most stirring thing that has happened is the thunder and lightning upheaval of the past few days. The storm of the 15th was a succession of showers from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. with intense thunder, lightning, hail and deluge of water. The hail was of sufficient force in Amherst to break 800 lights of glass in the greenhouses at M.S.C. Both Montgomery and Butler of Hadley met with heavy losses also. From this storm came lightning that set a house afire in North Amherst. The storm that followed, on the 19th, in the late evening, fired the dwelling house at Mass. State occuppied by the farm superintendent. The downpour caused serious washing both in the roads and fields and brought some serious damage to crops. Speaking of roads washing, the little road that comes out beside the West Pelham church was a complete washout — so complete that it is doubtful if it will ever be rebuilt. What was once a road now resembles an old, deeply gullied, dried-up stream bed.



Hand boom sprayer in use c. 1920. (Atkins)

Orchardists have sprayed and dusted as usual trying to keep the scale and insect enemies in check for the good of another year when we may have an apple crop. However, in spite of this the abnormal wet weather has given the scab spore an opportunity to take up its home wherever it wished without much fear of being disturbed. Gypsy moth is spreading — there are large brown patches on the Pelham hills showing where the foliage has been stripped. Some of the apple trees next to the woods east of the railroad are also showing the effect of damage to the foliage.

Corn, potatoes, and tobacco are having a struggle to produce a crop. All depressions in the field of Hadley and Sunderland as well as Amherst have been under water so many times that the baby plants simply gave up the struggle. The blossom season of April and May was so wet and cold that honey bees had a hard time to live, as they do not work with the temperature under 57 degrees. The State inspector of the bee hives was in town last week. He found 10 hives in one block of 30 that had "foul brood" which is a decay of the cells of honey. These swarms have to be destroyed to prevent the spread of the disease. We understand that this trouble was very prevalent last year in the Pittsfield area. Grass is ready for cutting but hay weather is not here.

On the 28th of May, Rev. and Mrs. Toppan observed their 10th wedding anniversary. The Grange honored them at their meeting with a luscious cake and a purse of money. The church officials remembered them with the gift of a lovely coffee table and expressed their desire to heartily cooperate with the Toppans in all of the church life. The Christian Endeavor Societies also presented them with a gift at a surprise party at Camp Anderson on the 27th.

Children's Sunday was observed at the church with appropriate exercises presented by a well trained group of the younger members of the Church school. Mr. and Mrs. Hollis Moore brought their son William Hollis for baptism. The day was definitely a children's day, there were many little ones scattered amongst the older members of the congregation. The Cradle Roll shows an enrollment of 30, proof of our claim to you concerning the march of the babes. The happy custom of presenting a flowering plant to each of the younger children as a special recognition of youth was of interest to all.

A shower was given to Mrs. Philip Ives at the home of Mrs. Robert Schoonmaker Sr. on the first of the month.

Sophie E. Couch was married the 18th to Alden M. Hobart of North Amherst. The couple is at home in Hartford — Mrs. Hobart being employed by Aetna Life Inc. and Mr. Hobart by the Firestone Co.

Mrs. Frances McKeeman has been substituting as teacher in the kindergarten for Mrs. John Leslie during the last month.

Mrs. Leslie's father, Dr. George McPherson, died last week. He had served as head of the Belchertown State School until two years ago when he came to live in South Amherst.

Irving H. Henrdrick has sold his farm on Potwine Lane to Louis Cote of Holyoke. We understand there are four children in the household. If we remember correctly, the Hendrick house which was built some 30 years ago, has never before been fortunate in having children in the home to play in the attic or climb in the haymow. Mr. Hendrick has moved into a part of Mr. Brace's house. Marshall Brown, who is in the military service stationed at Westover Field has rented the cottage of Kate Judd opposite her residence. Mr. Brown has an attractive little wife who will find a welcome in our community.



The 19th century barn, recently owned by Irving Hendricks, at 104 Potwine Lane, presently owned by the Brunnels. Pictured in May 1984 when "Lilacs last in the (barn) yard bloomed." (M.A. Elliott)

Yesterday at 4 p.m. David Parsons of North Amherst was stunned by a bolt of lightning while riding from the field on a load of hay. He fell from the load and was run over by the wagon but no broken bones. A Boy Scout was on the rear of the load and was not injured and gave David artificial respiration.

Stanley Mitchel of North Amherst lost a brooder house by fire containing 100 turkeys. To offset this, we understand John McKemmie is raising 100 here in South Amherst.

Because of the freezing out of the apple crop some are increasing their poultry business. Ernest Markert will use his apple packing room for poultry accommodations. One green house has been converted into a brooder house and has 2,000 baby chicks within its walls. You can imagine that they will not need to warm their toes on the pipes any sunshiny day.

The mother cat brought in a rabbit last week about the size of a big rat. We have observed rabbits on the depot road shying away from the oncoming car while a good big turtle stood his ground and said, "I am not afraid".

Saddle horses are being secured by a good many individuals in this section of the state. Both Mt. Holyoke and Smith Colleges have their riding schools. June 10th a meeting of horse lovers was held at a farm in Leverett at which there were 85 saddle horses shown.

The packing and shipping of boxes of clothing across the seas has consumed much time of some of the women of the church. One helpful woman came near losing the coat she depended on for her own use when by mistake it got packed for shipment. However the error was discovered in time to rescue it from the ocean voyage.

A chicken salad supper with crushed strawberries on ice cream for dessert was served by the church this week. There was a goodly attendance of townspeople as well as some from Springfield, Hadley, and Northampton. Some 34 tickets were sold and a net profit of $75 was realized.

The York Snap Bean Camp of Cummington for working girls, to open in July has been cancelled. The 30 acres of bean plantings, because of wet cold ground, failed to germinate and take their place in war production, thus eliminating the need of bean pickers.

The village common has taken on a new lease of life. A special committee of the Grange sponsored the mowing of the common as their project for Grange Day. A good hard day's work was done much to the credit of the committee who were there to see it through and, we might say, did most of the work.

Mr. and Mrs. John Schoonmaker brought their youngest child, Robert Cadbury, to church Sunday for baptism. John's brother Theodore performed the ceremony of administering baptism.



Theodore Schoonmaker, graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary in 1945, the only one to have gone out from the church of his youth, So. Congregational, into the ministry, in the church's 120-year history. (Ted Schoonmaker)

It is with great pleasure that we announce the wedding of Miss Mary Jane Stedman, 'Pidgie" to most of you, to Staff Sergeant Andrew W. Paul, recently returned from overseas. S/Sgt. Paul is the son of Rev. Chas. D. Paul of the 2nd Congregational Church of Amherst. The wedding took place in our church on the 28th with Mr. Paul and Mr. Toppan officiating.



Mary Jane Stedman, bride of S/Sgt. Andrew Paul, with her maid of honor, sister Nancy Stedman. Both lost to us too early. (Richard Stedman)

A daughter, Eleanor Gage, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Ives on the 25th. We have been itching a long time for some real live news like this to brighten up our pages. We all welcome the little maiden into our community life.

Another one of those midnight thunder showers last night seemed to tear the heavens asunder. One of the blasts of electricity spent its force on an elm tree directly in front of the parsonage. The minister's family must have felt that there is but a step between heaven and earth.

As this letter goes to press, Win Shumway is guarding the front steps of the church against the annual onslaught of youth. As he has done for many years in the past, as you well know, Win sits there waiting until the boys come and then helps them make a noise — Three guesses — it's the night before the fourth — and Winnie just yelled over and sent his regards to you all.

Your committee for the home friends

July 29, 1945

To our servicemen,

We are starting this letter on Sunday morning, July 22. Last week was a wet one beginning with an all day rain Sunday followed by showers every day to Saturday. Grass mowed the week before lay on the ground and discolored to a dark brown. All low spots and dead furroughs in the planted fields of corn and potatoes were again filled with water. We will now leave the weather which has a faculty of looking out for itself regardless of man's wishes.

To go back to July 1, perhaps the first item of interest was the celebration of July 4th. Most of this took place in the small hours of the morning. Firecrackers have been out since the beginning of the war, but the ringing of the church bell and other minor escapes are still indulged in. This year was no exception. The bell was rung while constables Win Shumway and Herman Markert watched the time allotted for jubilation. This was followed by what the fertile minds of youth could think of. We understand a "no account" wagon was brought over from West Street and burned north of the library with proper daring. Atkins'hay tedder was taken up the school steps or part way up and rolled back to the sidewalk. Evidently the boy power got a little weak and the full plan of putting it on the porch was given up. The steps showed bruises from the escapade and one wheel of the tedder came away with a wobble in its line up.

The boy's session of Camp Anderson, at Lake Wyola, was held the first two weeks in July, with Rev. Louis Toppan as director. In Mr. Toppan's absence from the pulpit on July 7 the service was conducted by Professor Alfred Goodale.

The church will be closed during August except that on the 19th the Rev. Francis A. Drake, formerly of North Hadley, will preach. Mr. Drake is Secretary of the Friends of the Soil, and is located during the summer at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The annual Daily Vacation Bible School has just closed a two week session.

Barbara Tiffany spent a week's vacation with Mrs. Toppan at a cottage on Lake Wyola. Clifford Tiffany took a trip to the White Mountains last week with his sisters. Marjorie Hutchings has just returned from a trip to California where she went to visit Herb who has recently shipped out.



Barbara Tiffany at the doorway of the Tiffany home, 1459 S. East St., formerly Cecil Jewett's, holding an oil painting of the house, done in 1955 by Merrilee Atkins. (Photo by E. Dimock)

The engagement of Louise McKemmie to Samuel Micka, of Easthampton, has been announced. Mr. Micka attended American International College at Springfield. Louise graduated this year from M.S.C., and will teach home economics at the Greenfield Junior High School this fall.

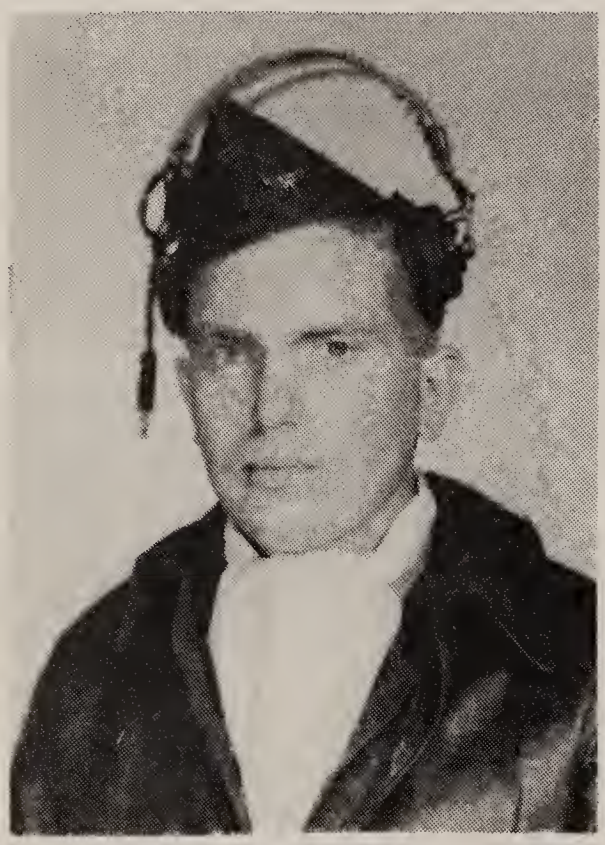
A kitchen shower was given on the 18th at the home of Mrs. W. H. Atkins in honor of Miss Mabel Miller, who was married on the 28th to Mr. Dwight Dwinell of Salem. The wedding was performed in the Second Congregational Church of Holyoke. They will make their home in Reading, Massachusetts.

Mrs. Mary Jane (Stedman) Paul is back at work and her husband, Andrew, has returned to the Army after their recent marriage. William McKeeman was at home recently from Fort Sampson, and is now at the Navy hospital at San Diego, California. Richard Schoonmaker is expected home from England soon on his way to the Pacific.

A nice letter of appreciation came this week from Herb Hutchings. Any suggestions which you have as to news you want in these letters will be most welcome. Other letters have been received from Carl Markert and Frank Kielbasa.

The Youth Hostel, on Herb Hutchings farm, has on this date, July 22, entertained 130 hostelers since the first of June. A good group of cyclists attended church today.

A Community Picnic will be held on the common Saturday, August 11. We are promised a parade of floats with suitable prizes, a horse race, ball games, chocolate milk and ice cream. This gathering should make for good feeling and give the youngsters a chance to work off their extra energy.



Wilbur Shumway, Air Force cadet, 1942, later promoted to Captain. Son of Win Shumway. (Shumway)

Church people and their friends met last week to consider further the redecoration of the church auditorium. The costs will be such that the people need to go down into the lower story of their pocketbooks for the necessary funds.

A cow tied out for her afternoon lunch in Hadley did not escape a lightning bolt that put an end to her young life. Storms this year have led to lightning striking trees in front of the Dwights and the parsonage on the Common and in front of Helen Harvey's on Shays Street.

Something about as active as lightning but of a different nature was the western steer that got loose in Hatfield. There are a lot of these steers which have been brought in to fatten. It seems that this steer was romping through the fields of onions and tobacco, which did not improve the fields or the natures of the farmers. The chief of police was called and he summoned two cattlemen who were armed with rifles. At this point action became furious. One gun refused to bark. Three bullets from the other bounded off the head of the steer. Now it became a hand to hand affair with the rear end of the gun used upon the steer's head with such effect that man was the conqueror, and retired with plaudits of the Hatfield farmers. Several such steers have been brought into South Amherst this year for home consumption, but they are mostly barn fed and not turned loose in the pasture.

Now that we are reporting wild west news we must not omit the story of a pony out of Ware that has been parading the hills of North Belchertown for the past year. A posse of 30 horseback riders gave chase recently but the pony was too fleet of foot and was not coralled.

Cloud bursts of water in Berkshire County, Massachusetts; Rutland County, Vermont, and in New Jersey have caused floods this last week. Crops and roads have been hard hit. One dwelling house was washed away as were several head of cattle pastured near the stream. Captain Wilbur O. Shumway III and his wife are the proud parents of a daughter, Patricia Ann, born at Millinocket, Maine. Win was so joyful at being a grandfather again that he broke a bone in his arm.

Committee of the Home Friends

South Amherst, Mass.
August 22, 1945

A letter to our Servicemen,

This afternoon with Mrs. Atkins' help I jotted down on the back of an old envelope items that we thought might be of interest to you. Overshadowing all events came the news of final victory, of course, but let us follow our usual course and tell you the events in their day-by-day sequence, rather in order of their importance.

First on the list of happenings was the Community picnic which was held on schedule on the Green, during the early evening of August 11. At 5 p.m. a parade was run off around the common. Prizes were awarded to Jimmie Wentworth for the best dressed pet, to Mary Ann Nanartonis for the best horse and rider, to Priscilla Goman for the best decorated tricycle. The families of Harold and Wesley Wentworth put on a float marked "Food for Victory" — which consisted of a triangular shaped coop, in three sections, all gaily decorated with flags, and containing a pig, a hen, and a duck. Fourteen babies were exhibited in the baby show and to pick one win-



Bill Atkins leading the bedecked tricycles as usual at the July 4th picnic on the S. Amherst Common, 1965. This wheel of the 1880's was won by Ernest Smith of So. East Street in an 1886 race, according to W.H. Atkins. See story about the bike, p 28. (Elliott)

ner was giving the judges a problem greater than that of Solomon. However I doubt if Solomon could have shown more discretion than these judges — as he left one woman to make another happy, while each of these mothers came away happily bearing a blue-ribboned baby in her arms. Earl Goman umpired a game of softball between the men and women — very tactfully announcing the score a tie of 6 to 6 when darkness overtook the tired but enthusiastic players. Thus another harmonious ending to a contest with a blue ribbon to each side. I forgot to mention that before the game one of the most important features — the food — was served on tables brought from the church and library to the common. Basket lunches were brought by the 125 present and ice cream sandwiches and chocolate milk were served by the committee. The final event was a magician's show in the Munson Memorial Building.

Last Tuesday and Wednesday were set aside as Victory Days but most of the real recognition of the event was expressed at public gatherings in the evening. Our church bell was rung vigorously, in fact it got in a few strokes on a false report earlier. In Amherst the celebration took on more of a demonstration with a parade led by the American Legion which secured some drums to give the occasion some necessary zest.

On both Monday and Tuesday evenings large numbers attended the Union Services held at the First Church in Amherst. For Wednesday evening the American Legion and the town authorities arranged for a meeting at the Town Hall. This was held in commemoration of you who have served our country in the Armed Forces bringing the war to a victorious end. This service brought to a close our outward expression of both joy and sorrow pent up in the heart of man. The individual still carries the heartache for the lost one and anxiety for the future.

The 19th was observed throughout the nation as a day of prayer and consecration. Rev. Francis Drake, formerly of North Hadley gave a good sermon at the South Amherst Church. After the service a dinner was served in the vestry, attended by about 100 people.

Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Schoonmaker and daughter Ruth Ann who were leaving the next morning for California were present, as was their son Richard, recently returned from overseas. Words of appreciation were expressed for the active part the elder Schoonmakers had taken in all of the church and community activities — their leaving being likened to the cutting of a piece out of a cake — "it just wasn't whole anymore". Incidentally they bought a large trailer in which to live on their way. The trailer has sleeping accommodations for four people and is arranged with folding doors for sectional compartments if so desired. The Schoonmakers expect to be gone one or two years and the homestead is rented to Captain and Mrs. John Lodge. Capt. Lodge has recently returned from overseas and is stationed at Mass. State.



Richard Schoonmaker on furlough with his son, Sloan, c. 1943. Served in Europe, and was aboard ship for the Pacific, in the Panama Canal when the war ended. (Schoonmaker)

Camp Anderson has had an attendance of 85 girls the past two weeks. The Pelham Rural Fellowship of Churches, to which we belong, takes a great part in maintaining this camp and sponsors the boys session.

To date 275 hostelers have enjoyed the accommodations at the AYH at Hutchings. One of the principal workers in establishing the hostel here was a girl named "Pat" Jennings — then at Mass. State, and now with the Red Cross in France. Pat writes vividly about her travels.

The Kindergarten is about to open in the home of Mrs. John Leslie. There will be some children from uptown as well as from South Amherst. This is a change from last year when the school was held in the Munson Library.

There will be an auction at the home of Ernest G. Brown on West Street tomorrow. Mr. and Mrs. Brown will return to California where they have been living for some time due to the ill health of Mr. Brown.

We have noted the painting recently of some of the houses about the neighborhood including that of Mr. Lashaway on West Street — (the house that was partially destroyed by fire last year); the house of Durell Swan on West Street, also the former William Hannigan house on Shays Street which has been purchased by William Russell. The trustees of the church are laying plans to paint the parsonage this fall. The last time this was done was in 1937.

Frank and Albert Chaffe are having their house covered with an asbestos shingle siding. Harold Wentworth has put new stables under his barn on the William Sauer place to accommodate his herd of milk cows. George Barnes has bought a building site from his father-in-law on which to raise a house this fall.

During May, June and July, rain fell 53 days out of 92. Lawns have needed a good mowing at least once a week. Hay that got caught out in the rain for a week would have three inches of new growth coming up through the mowed grass. Some of the first crop is not harvested at this date. Field crops have suffered severely from an over supply of water. Blight has got into the potato vines which means rot. Many reports are coming in of very small yield and decayed tubers. Tomatoes started off at $12 a bushel and now are $1. We did get a few peaches and there are some apples in South Amherst on the higher elevations.

The Massachusetts Fruit Growers were invited to the college for a discussion of fruit problems and a trip through their grounds. They were also taken into the cold storage where peaches and sodas were passed out to the company.

Betsy the cat has produced another brood of kittens. When we were putting hay into the barn we watched her bringing them out of her improvised hospital one at a time to the wagon shed. She evidently had no wish to have her kittens covered with hay. Statistics show that a rat eats and destroys $2.50 worth of grain a year. We consider Betsy the most valuable animal on the farm as she not only produces new mousers but brings in dozens of rats a year.

Rabbits are very plentiful and it is seldom one can drive down Depot Road without seeing the little fellows out for their daily exercise. They are more agile than the skunk we saw in the road today that attempted an ill-timed crossing and met a tragic death without a chance to fire one round.

We noted in the paper that the Northampton police were looking for the owner of a bull calf found wandering in the road. Later issues of the paper did not tell of the final tie-up of the calf but, if unable to find the owner, we think the police should be able to decide on the disposition of a veal.

One of our cows stole a march on us to bring forth her newborn calf down in the Morell pasture. Our outfit turned out one afternoon to find the wanderers. You may question their success in an 85-acre lot whose main wooded growth is blueberry, alder and wild rose bushes. However after a week, Magnolia came out to the bars with a bright heifer calf that accepted civilized life with proper enthusiasm.

A word of appreciation for our service letter came to hand this week from Roger Smith, U.S.S. Shikellany. He writes, "I hope that you will continue these letters as long as any appreciable number of fellows are away." In referring to the Island of the Pacific he says, "There is not much in the Pacific Ocean that is worth walking across the street to see." He follows this by saying, "We have a genial group aboard and life is enjoyable from that angle. In spite of all this I will sure be glad when we get back."



Peter Rak (Rock), reportedly most seriously wounded of soldiers from So. Amherst in World War II, now of Agawam. (Bertha Rak Parsons)

Another letter from Peter Rak in France: he writes, "I left the hospital last winter just in time for the 'Bulge' and managed to live through it, all the way to the Danube River. I am in the hospital again for the same wound of last September — schrapnel in my left shoulder. I'll be coming home sometime soon; I have 108 points and it will be South Amherst to stay. It will be six years in October that I left Amherst, the first year in the Army I missed home a lot and after that I never thought of home — but now that is all I think of, I'll be a free man again." Come on, Peter, there is a place for you and every other man out of South Amherst.

Now to the second part of our letter —

* * *

Within the heart of many a wife and mother has long been burning a steady flame of ardent hope of swift termination of this mighty world conflict — maybe even a miracle that might bring you boys and girls home to a world of peace. Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue, on August 7, 1945, there flashed across the nations the startling news of a manmade control of gigantic power unlike any force ever before released on earth, — the advent of the atomic bomb in action! "This must be it," we whispered, "the miracle in answer to our prayers." No man-made phenomenon of such tremendous power had ever occurred before. The world's deadliest weapon hurled against our arrogant and hitherto defiant enemy.

A few days later, the mighty Russian Army lashed out upon another enemy stronghold. Rumors of imminent surrender fanned hope to a tense excitement, and then — on August 14 — came the wondrous news "Japan accepts unconditional surrender."

They said it couldn't happen so soon, but this is it!

History will duly record the stirring events of the past few weeks: children of today will never forget the tumultuous celebrations following; but no words or records can ever measure or express the upsurging wave of relief, thanksgiving and joy, released by those glorious words, "The war is over!"

The relentless power of our Allied Nations has by God's grace gained a complete victory in this war against ruthless tyrannical aggressor nations; now shifting into reverse, we will together win out ultimate objective of peace on earth, and goodwill to all mankind. How soon you may lay aside your uniforms we cannot tell, but you have done a magnificent work and we are proud of you. In spirit at least we are going out to meet you, and will "strike up the band" for a rousing welcome as each of you comes HOME.

Your committee of the home folks

Sept. 22, 1945
South Amherst,
Mass.

To our Friends in the Service,

Perhaps it would be of interest to you to know the schedule we follow in writing these letters. First it is our plan to get the letter written by the 25th of each month. This gives us five days to get it mimeographed and mailed out on the first of the next month. The letters were mimeographed the first year by Mary Jane Stedman, through the winter of 1945 by Marjorie Elliott, and now by Mrs. Louis Toppan. The mailing is divided between four of the committee.

Without further introduction, we will start this letter with the most interesting item of last week, the hurricane that came near blowing Florida into the Gulf of Mexico. We well remember the one of 1938 which did much damage and filled us with fear. The papers warned us to be ready for a big blow this time. This gave us the mental shakes as we read of its progress along the Atlantic Coast the week of the 17th. However, it lost its force when it reached us and our midnight slumbers were not disturbed.

Not so with the slumbers of a certain pony who must have awakened in the night and had dreams of liberty for he was seen wandering about the Common in the morning with halter and rope attached. To all appearances the luscious grass by the roadside was more enticing than the hay and oats diet at the farm. He was seen later in the day, on the home stretch, with a young woman astride his back.

The meanderings of this pony reminds us of a heifer of ours seen on the Common one morning this summer enjoying his breakfast free from restraint. David Stedman gave her a "Shoo" down Depot Road toward her home hunting rounds. She continued to give us trouble not minding barbed wire or electric fences till we placed her in a yard at home surrounded by a board fence with male companionship.

An unusual happening on the home farm was the birth of twins to a young cow down in our home pasture. The twins were male and female and when found the girl baby had floundered into a pool of mud and water. She was more dead than alive; however she was rescued from her uncomfortable position and brought to the barn. Here her shaking body was covered with heavy blankets and later in the evening we found her up on her feet. By six a.m. she was taking her morning breakfast with the same full enjoyment as that of her brother.

The Board of Health is posting signs prohibiting the dumping of animal refuse on the town dumps. This will be a disappointment to a regiment of rats that inhabit such places. Last spring some discarded eggs from an incubator were thrown out and a part of them hatched out on the dump. We understand they were rescued and continued their existence in more suitable surroundings.

Selectmen were ordering SLOW signs to be posted about the Common, one near the older water tub. An alarm of fire was rung in at our station in Amherst by neighbors who saw smoke pouring out of the windows of an adjacent house. The firemen found that the smoke from a fire built in the furnace chose to come out of the building through the windows rather than the chimney. A man in Leeds, lost in the woods built such a big fire that it not only called out the neighbor but was the means of his being taken to court and fined — a sad ending.

Three places have changed ownership since our last letter -that of Edward Kent, corner of Potwine Lane and West Street to Mr. Kay from West Springfield — that of E.W. Brown, West Street to Sebasti and Wynsaki - and that of James Cleland, Shays Street, to Ralph L. France of Mt. Pleasant Street. Joseph Messier of Depot Road has sold a building lot to his son-in-law, George Barnes.

Silos are being filled where enough corn has survived the wet weather to produce a crop. The yield of potatoes through the country is large but way under normal here. The price of poultry has dropped back from black market figures to. government announced prices.

Sergeant Donald Russell and wife have announced the birth of a son. Sgt. Russell is on his way home from England to welcome him. Also due to arrive any day is Phil Stedman who has never seen his handsome young son, now about a year and a half old.



The family of Helen and Arthur Stedman: Dick, Bob, Phil and Nancy Stedman in back, David and Mary Jane in front. Phil and David served in World War II, and Dick served in Korea. (Richard Stedman)

Schools have opened with Mrs. Helen Knowlton as teacher of the intermediate room, enrollment 25; and Mrs. Margaret Senser teaching the primary room with 28 children. The Kindergarten is taught by Mrs. John Leslie at the library. The school consists of 10 pupils from South Amherst and 20 from outside.

The State College is opening its fall program with an enrollment of 650 girls and 150 boys in the straight four year course. About 50 returned veterans are taking the short two year course and 50 others are taking special studies. In addition to these there are 250 military trainees.

Amherst College is expecting an enrollment of 250 for the regular scholastic course also another class will be made up of front line men recommended by their officers for outstanding military ability and scholastic aptitude. Three hundred of these men have already arrived and another 50 are expected January 1st.

One of those popular church suppers was put on Friday night with meat loaf, macaroni and cheese, salad, rolls, coffee and ice cream on the menu. In the evening the art of magic was demonstrated by young Curtis Higgins to the great pleasure of the youngsters. When you fellows get back we must kill the fatted calf and have a celebration.

The annual chicken pie supper is scheduled for Oct. 18th. We wish the 50 men we send these letters to might enjoy the friendship as well as the chicken pie with us.

Mrs. Marjorie Atkins Elliott and son Kirk will sail on the Gripsholm for Athens, Greece in the middle of October. Her husband is there as technical director of a livestock project under the Near East Foundation. At present she is quite sym pathetic with you boys who have had all the shots in the arm before going overseas.



Kirk Elliott, at two years, Agnes Dombalian and Costa Soyakas on a hot day in the mountains near Athens, Greece, 1946. (M. Elliott)

On Sept. 30th we set our clocks back one hour and so throw overboard "Eastern war time". This will give us daylight between seven and eight o'clock in the morning this winter and will meet with the whole hearted approval of all families who have school children.

We farmers would like this schedule of time throughout the year but what would become of the twilight ball games.?

A close call to drowning last month was that of the two year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Backe. Rita with an older girl friend went to walk and stopped on Potwine Lane at Plum Brook Bridge. In some way Rita fell into the brook and the chum, some 10 years old, jumped in and rescued her. That the water was not too deep for the older girl to wade was fortunate for both.

Clifford Shumway reports the loss of about 50 chicks out of a flock of 150. We hope thieving will not become universal among the large flocks in South Amherst. The opportunity is inviting to those who are inclined to pilfer and steal.

The owners of the Van Wert Steak House have asked for an all alcoholic liquor license — however the laws are such that it cannot be approved, even with the consent of the selectmen.



Van's Steak House in the Notch, originally called the Devil's Garden after a name given the trap rock area. Irving Van Wert and Earle Shumway ran it circa 1925-30. After a fire, Van Wert bought out Shumway, rebuilt, and changed the name to Van's. Thorpe bought the place in 1939; sold in 1941. It is gone and the State has a recreation center there now. (Paul Thorpe, 1984).

Late flash — Corporal Marshall Brown, stationed at Westover Field and living with his wife in the little house opposite the Judds, brings us the news that they are the parents of a daughter born Sept. 25th. We are interested in having the little one get a good start in S.A.

What next? No doubt many of you who are returning from your wartime stations, like some of us at home, are thinking -in terms wider far than our own every day bread and butter affairs. Can we appreciate and comprehend the present situation in a world once more at peace? Will man measure up to his challenge, does he have it within himself to live in peace with his fellowmen?

Dr. Paul Douglass, president of one of our American universities, in an article headed "Here comes a New World", is quoted as saying, "It's a question as to whether we are to have enough inner ethical resources to keep character in society. Can we equip a generation of men with habits of reasonableness and understanding necessary to make brotherhood a decisive factor in our global community? We must make a choice between good and evil. The atomic bomb with all its staggering implications gives us no other option." Many other writers are stressing similar thoughts: "There must be more emphasis on the need for spiritual values on the part of all of us," says an editorial in a current agricultural paper. Heroic General MacArthur, a military man all his life who speaks with the wisdom born of knowledge painfully acquired, says, "We have had our last chance. Unless there is a sharp spiritual change and improvement of human nature that will synchronize with our almost matchless advance in literature, art, science, and all material and cultural developments, we are indeed lost." A well known commentator says, in today's paper (Sept. 17th) "The atomic bomb cannot be kept a secret. Our safety is gone the day our secret becomes known. There is only one solution. We work together to build a new world for all, or we perish together and our days of grace are few."

However, like the refreshing uplift of our cool bright September days, when the slopes of old Norwottuck seem glorified by sparkling sunlight under clear blue skies, the UNSEEN FORCES (as set forth in an article written in 1937) seem especially pertinent and encouraging for us today. Mr. Charles R. Gay, president of the New York Stock Exchange, and an outstanding example of the best of human traits, is quoted as saying "Man has an instinctive reverence for the higher things. You may not see it, I may not see it, but it is there. Consciously or unconsciously, the average man has a desire for something fine, something ideal, something noble. He may think himself a cold hard business man, but in reality he has under his skin a craving for beautiful objects, spiritual entities, for romance and dramatic events, which will remain with him always. Man has a deep-seated reverence for the square deal, for integrity, for honor and for justice but all too often he does not give it an opportunity for expression. Let us then give some attention to the unseen forces such as beauty, art, music, education and romantic imagination, which are far more significant than the average man imagines."

From a huge U.S. transport 10 thousand miles from home, one Navy lad wrote, "It is a common sight to see men of different faiths attending the same religious ceremonies. There seems to be a unity, a bond between these boys which transcends all differences — a comradeship which cuts through and gets down to essentials."

A Unity — which transcends all differences - is this our green light signal for the "new day for mankind", for the better world ahead?"

Your committee of home folks

Oct. 27, 1945

To Our Friends In The Service

We will open this letter with a comment on the weather which is always a subject of interest. The past week has been so warm and pleasant, it was far more comfortable to be in one's shirt sleeves than otherwise. Oct. 15 brought the hunter out of his seclusion and into the waste lands looking for wild game. The barking of a gun when day was just breaking was not unusual. A small Paddock boy was seen trudging along with a pheasant while his older brother carried the gun. Automobiles left standing by the roadside are evidence that hunters hungry for the kill are out in the wilds.

Agricultural fairs have come and gone. Belchertown started out with a rain but cleared by noon. The fair was supposed to be postponed one day but we understand crowds of people came just the same to visit and patronize the shows and gambling devices. No doubt many an easy earned dollar and some hard earned ones escaped from the visiting throng into the sizeable pockets of the midway gangsters.

The Belchertown State School authorities arranged to have the "Merry-Go-Round" left standing Sunday and had the children of the school transferred in buses to the park and given a ride, much to their enjoyment.

Northampton Fair Association arranged for a week's show -plus pari-mutual betting on horse racing. Here again most of the public came to wager their money and went home without any.

The State Association of Jersey breeders held an auction sale of consigned stock at the fair grounds in Northampton the 13th. The average price per individual was over $300. This event was followed by a Holstein auction the next week which yielded over $500 per creature. Several of these cows and heifers were grown by 4-H Club members. Selling the cows through the auction brought them good returns.

The Belchertown agent for Surge Milkers had the Surge representatives put on a movie picture at the Munson Library last week. This not only showed the scientific construction of the machine but the inner workings of the cow's organism that manufactures the milk, and distributes it through the teats for the use of mankind.

The beauty of the forest foliage is fast disappearing as ripening takes place and the leaves drop to the ground. The past week has seen our lawns covered with a carpet of varied colors which was the delight of small children as they burrowed in the piles of leaves that were being raked together.

A flock of wild geese was seen in the skies this morning in their usual v-shaped order of placement wending their way Southward, piercing any weather elements that may try to obstruct their progress. Last week our attention was called to the tragic death of a cat by name of "Jack" who was out after a mouse across the road, when hit by an automobile. Although this cat belonged to Clifford Tiffany, we regret the loss as Jack assisted Betsy in keeping the mice in some control. However, Betsy has three rugged youngsters who if they follow their mother's footsteps will bring credit wherever they may go. The poisoning of rats has been carried on with more or less success but enough are ever left, to repopulate their homes. Recently rats broke into a brooder house and killed 100 baby chicks in one night.

The annual chicken pie supper put on by the Trustees of the Church took place Oct. 18. Reservations were made in advance by the public for accommodations at the tables. Two-hundred and eighty tickets were sold for the supper which required the setting of a second table. We understand that aside from the potatoes, squash and turnips, 40 hens gave up their lives for the festive occasion. We do not have the data on the pumpkin and apple pies but by simple calculations we would figure about 40. If it had been possible to have had you with us the enjoyment of our people would have been complete.

The American Legion installed new officers last Tuesday evening in the Munson Library Building. The new Commander is Frederick A. Colby of our own village. The Selectmen and their wives were invited to attend and witness, not only the American Legion installation but the Woman's Auxiliary. Installation officers were present from surrounding towns which made up a goodly number. Refreshments were served in the basement dining room. Music from the orchestra with dancing in the main room ended the festivities.

The Kindergarten Association is sponsoring a dance on Oct. 30th to be held in the Munson Memorial building. Ray Black's orchestra will play from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Tickets $1 tax included. Coffee and homemade pie on sale in the dining room downstairs. This looks like an interesting occasion. We expect to see a few military men as some are getting back from overseas. The following names have come to our attention that are discharged and arrived home: Phillip Stedman, Fritz Capen, James Towson, Carlton De Gowen, Willis Hall, Howard Lovett, Peter Rak, Emil Smith and Sherwin King.

Smith College for the first time in her feminine life has accepted a male student. He is a returned B-17 pilot and now may enjoy the companionship of 2,055 girls. He is studying advanced Spanish with a group of them. This group takes meals together and speak nothing but Spanish. When asked for comment he said, "The Army was never like this." Following this item of news came one from Simmons College having accepted two male students. Her first break into the masculine group in her 46 years of existence.

William Russell of Shays Street has bought land of James Tufts opposite the Pomeroy estate on Pomeroy Avenue and will build a house of the Cape Cod pattern for his son Leonard who was discharged from the Army a year ago.

Charles King has sold his homestead to his neighbor Mr. Earl Goman. We understand Mr. King has the privilege of staying on in the house and that Mr. Goman contemplates the erection of another green house. We are pleased to know that Mr. and Mrs. King will be able to continue on in South Amherst where they have many friends.

Kenneth Thayer has the job of painting the parsonage and garage. Our records show they were last painted in 1937. Speaking of paint we should include the King homestead which is getting a freshening up by the new owner.

Wesley Wentworth and men are enlarging Howard Atkins house by building onto the southeast corner an extra room with a commodius basement. If the basement is given up to a playroom we can see it as an attractive place for the neighborhood children.

The Community Chest drive is coming on next week. The budget calls for $16,000. Six thousand dollars to the War fund, $3,950 to Boys Club, $1,800 to Boy Scouts. The remainder to smaller agencies. We understand extensive improvements are being made in the Boys Club building. A full time executive will be employed for the year.

Theodore Schoonmaker was ordained into the ministry last week at Mt. Vernon Church in Boston. He will continue there as assistant pastor.

Bobby Thayer who has been in Dickinson Hospital for appendicitis operation, returned home Sunday.

Edward Capen fell from a scaffold staging 40 feet onto a pile of bricks three weeks ago. He has so far recovered as to return from the hospital where he was taken at the time of the accident.

The demand for the automobile is increasing as you boys get home. Automobile dealers are advertising to buy cars, that they may meet the demand.

High winds today, Oct. 27th. The fallen leaves were trying to find a secure resting place as they twirled about the buildings to lodge in one place and then decided to move on to a more protected area. The wind swept down Shays Street and gathered up the fallen leaves from the maples just south of Adams' house and north of Davenport's and swept them across the common with the speed of the racing horse. Some found refuge in the hedge south and back of the church and some twirled around the steps. Some found refuge about the library, in the garden among the shrubbery, or under the bushes by the north door. To see this motley array racing to these two institutions for security and protection is but a symbol of what many a human heart longs but lacks the effort to attain.

Now to the second part of this letter by Mrs. King.

The war is over! Planned destruction and death have ceased, you are coming home to us! With all the might and power of the nation and of every individual, we may yet together reconstruct resume and renew of efforts for the realization of the bright future of which we have dreamed! Thank God so many of you have returned, and the rest of you are free from the fear of bombs and battles . . .

Even as the golden glory of Autumn's brilliant coloring -the overtones in Nature's symphony of seasons - thrill us with their wondrous beauty, so also the victorious overtones of recent significant world events inspire us with joy and hope and thanksgiving.

And listen, folks, Mom's still rather short of sugar and a lot of the cooking usuals, but it's November you know, and already there's an ominous clatter in the kitchen. Turkey-roaster, pie-plates, rolling pins, recipes, spices, dried fruits, nuts, etc., all are coming out for a brisk scrub-up or check-up; and can't you smell the pickles and mincemeat and spice cakes and puddings! Trust Mom to find a way, in spite of restrictions for this is a real peacetime Thanksgiving, so "Hurrah for the fun - is the pudding done? Hurrah for the pumpkin pie."

Committee Of The Home Folks

Nov. 25, 1945

Dear Friends:

This month's high spot was Thanksgiving on the 22nd with the folks at home enjoying the easy access to turkey meat. We were glad to read the news report of the Thanksgiving menus for the boys still overseas and that they compared favorably with our holiday meals.

We also read of a ship load of 102,000 pounds of turkey billed to the boys in Manchuria running upon a mine. However the damage was not so serious but that the boat was able with assistance to continue on to her destination.

We wish there might be more transportation facilities available to bring more of you boys home from these distant lands. However each month our community welcomes a few more returning veterans. The following is the list we have at this date.

John Allis	Lester Rhodes
Fritz Capen	Peter Rak
Carlton De Gowen	Carlton Russell
Willis Hall	Emil Smith
Royal Ives	Phillip Stedman
Donald King	Clifford Tiffany
Sherwin King	James Towson
Howard Lovett	Michael Winiazek

Dr. L. N. Durgin will be released December 3rd and open his office on Amity Street. Dr. Eugene Holden has been discharged and is at his home on Main Street.

Armistice Day, November 11, passed by without our hardly knowing it except that the mail was not delivered and the stores were closed; however, I think that was the day Miss Julia Tiffany, nurse at the Clark School for the Deaf and Dumb had a group of children over from the school in Northampton for an outing. They came over to the barn and had a high old time romping on the hay.

Last week, the monthly church supper night, was designated Children's Night. You can be sure they were all out to the supper and one would judge by the numbers none were left at home. A program was arranged for the evening. Groups of children impersonated characters, and played their parts on the stage to the great enjoyment of the adults as well as the children.

A group of men met at the home of James Tufts this month and discussed the forming of a men's club. The need of a skating field for the little folks was recognized and steps taken to arrange with Mr. Roland Coe and Ernest Whitcomb for permission to flood some land in the dale back of the blacksmith shop. We noted several men working there yesterday, clearing the tall grass and muskrat houses from the land in preparation for flooding. A good sized pond can be secured with a shallow depth of water which will insure safety for the youngsters. Now for two or three good cold nights and away we go.



Baxter Bridgman's family home, bought in 1854 and kept in the family until 1927. (See book ***John Nutting****). The three sons went to Amherst College; two girls became a writer and a missionary; Mary married the Rev. Herbert W. Boyd, pastor, 6 yrs. at So. Congregational, built by her grandfather. Next owners, George and Nancy A. Nutting Hannum, had no children and lived first in Belchertown, then So. Amherst, celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary May 6, 1906. The house wa sold to G. Bridgman. The James Tufts family lived there next. (H. McChesney)*

The population of South Amherst was increased the 29th of October by the birth of a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Howard Atkins. We are anticipating further news along this line in the near future. The welcome of our community goes to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Bagley consisting of two daughters of school age and a son Raymond Jr. who has already enlisted in the Marines. They have rented and are occupying the "Towne House" on the Bay Road. We remember Mrs. Bagley formerly Doris Wales, as one of the active young people in our church life.

Frank Koeber has given his home a new covering of asbestos shingles. William Lashaway has repaired and repainted his house, seriously damaged by fire a year ago. All these improvements help to make West Street more attractive.

Henry Wentworth has taken over the care of the Munson Memorial building and grounds. It is in constant use by the kindergarten, weekly dances, the Grange, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and special gatherings of various groups.

We are glad to report that Tony Speiller, who has had a seige of pneumonia the past three weeks, returned from the hospital yesterday on his way to health.

First Lt. Doris Cowles of the Army nurses is being transferred from the 148th General Hospital at Saipan to Japan.



Doris Cowles, a WAVE, at home, 1178 S. East Street in 1943. A scene altered today with the Tufts' barn gone, and ranch houses now across the street. A number of trees now grow south of McKemmie's house and cut off the view today. The maple tree behind Doris was transplanted from the Cowles swamp to replace shade trees lost in the 1938 hurricane. (Homer Cowles)

Because of the failure of the apple crop more chickens were raised by the fruit growers than usual for sale as broilers and roasters.

Ernest Markert not only raised chickens but some 125 turkeys. He reports some loss by foxes which are fairly numerous in the wooded areas about his buildings. Early one morning on lower Bay Road a local automobile driver came across a dead turkey lying in the road. We surmise Mr. Fox found his load a little heavy, stopped to rest, and then was frightened away by some oncoming car. Last week a similar incident was viewed on West Street as a hawk was seen slowly trying to gain altitude just ahead of an auto. He also had too heavy a load in the form of a well-grown chicken. As the approaching vehicle neared him, he let the chicken drop and soared to the heavens above, away from the dangers that surround mankind as well as hawks.

Another sad tale is that of the death of our Toby. Toby was not always good in the house, making extra work for the mistress. However we know the mistress cared for him the way she has for Betsy. Toby did not bring his rats to the house but showed them to the neighbors, who testify to his diligence.

While crossing the road on a neighborly visit to catch a rat, he was run down by an auto and never finished his trip. So ends the life of one more animal that had endeared himself to man. Betsy brought in three young rats in one day, she seems to have accepted the position of day and night watchman of the grain bin. It is a wary mouse that she does not nab. Before leaving the animal stories I must tell of the litter of seven puppies born in the garage at Howard Atkins. We expect a little masculine fellow down at Roland Coe's had some interest in them. However that may be, Howard vowed the mother claimed ownership. A suitable advertisement was put in the paper "Pups at $5 each" - this brought an immediate response and away went the pups. Howard is now trying to decide if not best to give up the grain business and go to raising pups. One more item taken from the newspaper. "The cat that was laundered but wasn't." It seems she got folded up in the bed sheets and stuffed into the laundry bag but escaped a bath when the sorting took place at the laundry. Now we will leave the dumb animals to their own devices and turn to mankind.

You will remember the note we made of Smith and Simmons College admitting male students for the first time in their history. Now the tables are turned and Springfield College, a man's college since its formation 60 years ago, has voted to admit female students.

The Boys' Club in Amherst is opening with Stephen Hamilton in charge; Physical Education under the guidance of Stephen Kosakowski who is instructor in the Physical Educational Department at the State College. Members of the club have the use of Amherst College swimming pool, Thursday evenings. We hope some of our boys will be able to enjoy these privileges.

A clipping from the Springfield Union dated September 1900 tells of the 75th anniversary of the building of our church. The edifice was erected in 1825 at a contract price of $3,300. It was the first church in this area to abolish tax support and rely upon voluntary gifts. Rev. J. F. Gleason, a Civil War veteran, was pastor and preached the anniversary sermon. He said in part "In morals the Church has an uplifting power drawing men from the slums of selfishness into the plains of generosity. The Church represents love of God and love of community." May we all aspire to these traits of character. Perhaps this is a good ending to our 11th letter in 1945.

Committee of the Church

December 22, 1945

Dear Friends:

We are now closing the year 1945, never to be lived again. Just how well this has been done we will leave it to others to pass judgment. Great events have taken place that will go down in history for a thousand years. The stirring events that preceded the closing of the war and the uncovering of man's inhuman acts, cannot be forgotten. In 1946 we set our minds to the upbuilding of mankind, rather than its tearing down. May these efforts be blessed by Kind Providence.

The two snow storms that have come in the last two weeks to cover the earth's surface with a blanket of beauty and purity, falling in a leisurely way, laying its coat quietly and softly on all innate as well as animate objects. To be a part of and enjoy the shifting of earth's dark outlook to that of purity in its whiteness, is but a symbol of the change that may take place in man's heart from that of hate and revenge to that of brotherhood and love.

We are glad again to report names of men that have been released from the Armed Forces. These include Henry Messier, John R. Decker, Herbert Hutchings, William Barton and Stuart Stiles.



Stuart Stiles in his PFC uniform visits the family in 1942 before leaving for Australia and New Guinea. (Stuart Stiles)

Two new men have gone out since our last letter, that of Frank E. Koeber Jr. and Kenneth Thayer Jr. Both men enlisting in the Navy and are stationed at Bainbridge, Indiana. Frank contracted scarlet fever somewhere along the line and is now in the hospital. However, good reports come as to his recovery.

A fine letter came in last month from Royal Ives at the time of his discharge. It is headed:

"Dear Committee:

I would like to take time to thank you one and all for the faithful service you gave to me and all the rest of us South Amherst boys while we were in the far corners of the earth. Your good letters brought much happiness to me. I am very proud to be a South Amherst boy, there is no place like home and South Amherst will always be home to me.

Sincerely,
Royal T. Ives

We wish more would let us know when discharged from the service, in order that we might keep our records complete.

The weather is the common topic of conversation. Why two weeks of solid zero weather should cause comment we cannot explain; nevertheless, beginning the 11th of December the mercury insisted on going down for that length of time to zero, and seldom climbed even with the help of "Old Sol" more than 20 steps any one day. However, the coldness of the day and snow-covered earth does not interfere with Christmas festivities, but is a part of it.

The community Christmas tree was erected in the corner of the Memorial Hall and was well decorated with tinsel and lights. Sharp eyes could discover an abundance of gifts under its branches which in due time Santa, with the help of willing hands, distributed to an eager, anticipating throng of happy children. The school children under the leadership of their teachers put on a well planned and interesting program. John Hannigan, impersonated "Santa", before a goodly number of 200 in the audience. This was followed the next day at 3:30 p.m. with a celebration of Christmas by the Kindergarten school - on Sunday the 22nd a choir of 20, with Jack Schoonmaker leading, Mildred Turk at the organ, and Robert Francis with his violin, made us realize that the Christmas spirit expressed through music, is truly capable of bringing "Joy to the World."

Last week a ship sailed out of Boston enroute to Greece laden with 4,000 tons of supplies for her relief sent by relatives and friends. Marjorie writes that black market prevails in Athens with eggs at 30 cents each; shoes $30 to $40 a pair and cigarettes $1.50 a package. However her family rations are set aside by the UNRRA at stabilized prices. In this connection it is of interest here in America that prices have been kept at reasonable limits even though supplies may be short. Not a pound of butter in Amherst, is quite a story to tell for a town stocked with dairy cows. Perhaps more cows like the one told of in a news item last week would help out. Her name was Essex Susone Belle, who died at the age of 16½ years. She had made 218,000 pounds of milk and 8,358 pounds of butter during her life. She had had 15 children and 60 grand and greatgrandchildren.

We promised in our last letter that we would be likely to give you more news this time about the "bundles from heaven." We are pleased to report the birth of a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kuckinski of West Street, also a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wales of Middle Street. Next month we will make a summary of the births of 1945.

The general health of our little tots has been good, but among older children there has been and is, a good deal of intestinal grippe and mumps. Just as we think these germ visitors are about to leave they decide to call on another family.

A wedding took place in our church last week of some of Mr. Toppan's friends. The decoration consisted of the organ's being hidden by sprigs of laurel. A Christmas tree at the right with tinsel decorations, made the whole setting one of beauty.

The first week of December was set aside by the State to make it legal to hunt deer. In this wild rush of man for deer, some were killed, some wounded and once in a while a boy or man shot in place of a deer. However gratifying it may be to gain the prize of the four-footed beauty, we are always filled with pity that the graceful creatures cannot escape the hunter's gun. Some weeks ago a news item told of a blind deer, in the highway that allowed men to walk up and lead him away. He was later taken to the M.S.C. for examination as to the cause of blindness.

Two fires in Amherst caused some excitement which occurred on the same night. One on Spring Street, a dwelling house and one on East Pleasant, the Amherst Laundry. The latter was at 3 a.m. just after most of the firemen had gone home and got back to bed from the first fire. This fire started in the furnace room but was not allowed to wreck the whole building. Laundry was held up several days, some that came back later showed marks of the battle. However clothes are being sloshed around again with soap and water in revolving machines and coming out as white and clean as ever.

A petition has been presented to the State to complete the hardening of Bay Road from Jack Schoonmaker's to the Hadley line. If this is done, and we meet Belchertown on the East, the Bay Road will have a hard surface complete from the Connecticut River bridge to Belchertown. This will make a hard top road between Northampton and Belchertown via Bay Road 2½ miles shorter than the route through Amherst.

In passing down Middle Street we can see children out skating and sliding on the ice back of the blacksmith shop. We expect ice 12 inches thick will hold up the most boisterous of the throng. This is the pond referred to in our last letter that interested men cleared for the little folks of the village.

Tonight is Christmas Eve. Henry Stoughton will furnish his truck to transport the Carol Singers about the community. The happy group have been invited to end their travels at the Towson's home where they will be entertained and served refreshments. Perhaps some of you have taken part and enjoyed the carol singing of former years, a custom that brings cheer as the music floats upon the air into the homes of the sick and shut-ins.

LATE FLASH IN TODAY'S MAIL from Bob Hutchings:

> "As one of your readers, I want to thank you ever so much for helping us boys out with regular and intimate news of our home community. As ever one of Boss Atkins' Boys."

With this we close our 12th letter of the year 1945.

Committee Of The Church

January, 1946

Dear Friends,

I must confess that I have run away from my job as your correspondent and gone down into the South Land for a month. We are 1,300 miles from home in the State of Florida, but expect to be back to edit or help edit your next letter. Mrs. Howard Atkins has consented to fill in for me this month with South Amherst news.

I have seen a large number of service men on our way South, especially at Fayettville, Georgia where Camp Bragg is situated. I accosted two of them on the street to ask why so many were about town, telling them that I was from Amherst, Massachusetts. One said, "I too, am from Amherst." With a glad expression of friendship and a hearty handshake we parted. In Florida I witnessed many boys unloading from a train. They were going to camp to prepare themselves to take places you vacate when coming home. They look hot and tired on the summer-like day, as they marched by us without a smile, tugging along their luggage. We could but wish that peace might prevail and that there would be no further need of this kind of sacrifice.

Some of the sights of interest on our way were the great forests of cyprus trees whose roots are always under water, long stretches of yellow pine by the highway, fields of cotton being picked by negro help and farms where hay and cotton stalks were stacked in the lot for outdoor winter feeding. There were Hereford beef in Virginia, while farther South a mongrel lot picked what they might by the roadside and in the swamp. Miles of roads built high above the swamps had no rails along the sides. Tubular pipes driven in the ground afford an ever flowing stream of water well above the surface of the earth. Here in Crescent City there are live oaks whose leaves are green the year round, while Spanish moss drips from their branches. Acres of orange trees loaded with yellow fruit decorate both dooryard and field. These are some of the sights that have lent interest to our trip.

Now I will take you North to the wintry snows, where the home town writer will take over and give the community news.



Atkins maple, a landmark, So. East St., after the 1951 ice storm. (Naomi Atkins)

Thank you, Father Atkins. — And it certainly is cold up here in contrast to the 70-85 degrees of comfort you report in your letters. Sunday, January 20, western Massachusetts shivered in a cold wave which brought the lowest temperatures of the year to many towns. It was reported to be 10 degrees below zero here. In spite of these low temperatures U.N.O. officials are now looking around Boston for a site for permanent headquarters, and recently in Greenfield there was a meeting to find a location in the Pioneer Valley.

At the close of 1945 and the opening of 1946 there were several celebrations and servicemen were home on leave. Melvin Harvey, stationed at Portsmouth, Virginia, was home for Christmas, as were Billy McKeeman, Kenneth Thayer Jr.,

Frank Koeber Jr. (now well over scarlet fever), and John MacLeod. The latter continues his studies at Harvard Medical School. His brother Allen has just been discharged. John Allis called on Mrs. MacLeod around the holidays and thanked her for sending these letters to him. He is now working in Hamp at Bill Hannigan's cleaning plant. Other holiday visitors to South Amherst were the Poors of Shays Street and Ted Schoonmaker's family who were entertained at Jim's. The Robert Schoonmakers spent three days with Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Brown at San Diego, California about Christmas time. Among the other New Year's parties were the Golf Club Dance at the Munson Building and a party at Jack Schoonmaker's. The Toppans had open house on New Year's afternoon.

The New Year brought elections of officers by both Grange and Church. Grange officers are as follows: master, William C. Atkins; overseer, Homer Cowles; steward, Walter Kentfield; assistant and lady assistant steward, Tom and Eunice Hannigan; lecturer, Mildred Turk; treasurer, Win Cowles; secretary, Kenneth Ives; gatekeeper Clarence Rule; chaplain Louis Toppan; pianist Henry Wesneski. Some of the many church officers chosen were John Schoonmaker for trustee, Howard Atkins and Mrs. Louise Cowan for deacon and deaconess respectively, and Mrs. Hallis Moore on the Board of Religious Education. The annual meeting of the church was adjourned for one week so that we could attend a meeting uptown called by the school board. Of special interest was the discussion of new school buildings. For some time there has been talk of a new elementary school building in the center. Now there is a group in town who wonder whether it would be better to build a new high school, let the junior high use the present high school building, and house the elementary grades in the present junior high and Kellogg Avenue schools. Amity Street school could become a kindergarten. It was suggested by one serviceman that private subscriptions be received to build a suitable high school as a war memorial.

At the senior high school recently thieves entered one night, broke the lock on the refrigerator of the cafeteria, rummaged in the storeroom, and then proceeded to the office where they stole a small sum of money. Betters news from the school is that at a sell out basketball game recently the home team beat South Hadley 40-36.

Graduating on paper from high school to college, we find that at Amherst College rooms and suites in Valentine Hall will be made available after March 18 to married undergraduate veterans and their wives. At Mass. State peactime conversion is on next to the last lap. Teachers have remarked of the servicemen in the ASTRP training group, "They never taught more earnest and receptive students." While the end of ASTRP will make some room for returning veterans the applications are still in excess of housing accommodations. Herbert Hutchings Jr. who is just out of the Navy has enrolled at Stockbridge School, and is working temporarily at father Schoonmaker's. We are glad that Herb is to be our assistant scoutmaster. Mason Belden has been discharged and is doing graduate work in wildlife management at State. Mr. and Mrs. Belden and daughter Penny have an apartment at John Kentfield's. Ralph France, who recently bought the Cleveland place on Shays Street, has been discharged and is expected to return to State as a teacher.

Some of you boys on leaving the Army are going into agriculture. Phil Stedman and his family are "borrowing" the W. H. Atkins' home while they are in Florida. Virtue keeps house for Bill and Phil who serves as foreman. By March 1st they hope to move to their new home on the former Morse place on West Street. Phil will go into the chicken business for himself. Carl Markert has been discharged and will work with his father and brother on the home place. Recently Bill Atkins appeared on the platform with Fred Coe, State Commissioner of Agriculture. It was on the occasion of a panel discussion promoted by the "Young Farmers of America" and took place at the annual Farm Bureau meeting at Worcester. Dairymen are interested in the shipment this month of 30



WILLIAM A. ROSS



ALLEN STANLEY MALCOLM

Four Navy sons of Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Ross of the Gulf Road in North Belchertown. The three older ones, Allen, Stanley and Malcolm, "were attached to the USS Indianapolis, and were at the San Francisco Fair, Allen being a printer first class and Stanley and Malcom firemen, first class. William was not assigned to a ship, but was one of 200 sailors on detail at the New York World's Fair." (Springfield Union, *Myrtle Rhodes*)

Ayrshire cows from the herd of Mrs. Gerald Jones, of North Amherst, to Puerto Rico, and a herd of Holsteins from farms in Easthampton to Brazil. In Hadley an 800-pound steer was captured by baiting a trick stanchion near Hockanum wood where he has been roaming unclaimed. Two hours' effort failed to get the beast into a three ton truck, so at last he was led home chained to the back of the truck.



The John and Mary Kentfield house of 1555 S. East St. was purchased in 1927 from descendants of Ernest Smith. For a period the 200-year-old house and farm were operated by Walter Kentfield, who was employed at the Eastern States Farmers Exchange warehouse. Since 1951 home of Ted and Phyllis Kentfield. (Kentfield)

More news of servicemen. Dick Schoonmaker recently sent thanks and appreciation for this letter. He was discharged December 22nd and is now working as a certified public accountant for Haskins and Sells of Charlotte, North Carolina. Donald King was discharged in November and is living in Northampton. He will return to his old job in the Amherst post office in February. Sherwin King was discharged January 24 and is working at Roland Oaks Electric Co. in Holyoke. The Win Shumways expect Jon and Marion Moon with their daughter Sandy home soon. Capt Wilbur Shumway visited with them recently at Denver. Leslie Turk jr. is a civilian again and is at home. Capt. John Lodge, who has been one of the officers at Amherst College, was recently discharged. He and his wife have been renting the Schoonmaker place this winter. Probably the most exciting thing that happened to one of our men overseas this month was the presentation at the English Court of Arthur Garrabrants, who met the king and queen with the princesses.

Though not a South Amherst boy, but known to many of you is Vincent Ross, son of Alexander Ross of Gulf Road, Belchertown. He enlisted in the Navy this month, the fifth son to go nautical. His brother Capt. Alan is in charge of a ship which should be bringing some of you home soon. Perhaps others will be returning by plane and land at Westover Field in Chicopee, where you will soon find a customs office and FBI. The Atlantic Transport Command will function there soon with the field a port of entry for diplomats from all over the world as well as other travelers. The diplomats will be immune to examination according to the dictates of international law.

Local news. David Stedman has just recovered from a serious case of mumps with many complications. The family just had their Christmas dinner on Sunday, January 27th. Archie Sanders is laid up for a few days with a nearly severed thumb which got in front of a saw. Herman Markert has just returned from a short visit at the Cooley Dickinson Hospital. He liked it so well that Jack Schoonmaker has gone to find out what the attraction is. The Herbert McChesneys have had almost continuous sickness at their home for many weeks, and must have been tired on New Year's Eve. They had been sleeping for several hours when they were awakened by several cars of revelers passing by. They did not realize the significance of this unusual noise until the next day when they looked at the calendar. Much chicken pox around just now. The 27 children of the kindergarten are so much exposed that the school has been shut down for a week.

With all the attendant ills of the winter we are glad to have Dr. Holden and Dr. Durgin back in town, even though it has made it necessary for Dr. James Huntington, who has occupied Dr. Durgin's office during his absence, to move to Northampton and Hadley where he will hold office hours on alternate days. You may be interested in the drive to raise $275,000 to enlarge the Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Forty-nine new beds will be added, and the service will be improved with greater economy. Recently, while patients there, Ruth Atkins and baby Celia posed with a nurse for a picture which will appear in a pamphlet to advertise the facilities of the hospital and help launch this campaign for funds. Mrs. A. S. Garrabrants has just been "capped" as a nurse's aide there. Mrs. James Tufts who has been engaged in this work for some time says, "I consider being an aide a valuable experience. The satisfaction I am deriving from this work will always be a pleasant memory. To all women who can do it I recommend heartily this form of much needed public service." Another drive which is going on is the March of Dimes which is headed locally by Mr. and Mrs. Kamel Hassan. Mrs. Hassan is treasurer, and Fred Colby is in charge of collections at the theatre. A ball is being planned at the Amherst College gym on February 21st. Mrs. W. H. Atkins is in charge of the collection of clothing from the South Amherst section in the Victory Clothing Drive. In her absence Mrs. Toppan is carrying out the plans.

When you return there may be bus service to South Amherst common. Mr. Pellessier, president of the Northampton and Holyoke Street Railways, said recently to one of our citizens, "I don't know just what can be done but we will do something."

In your last letter we promised a full list of the South Amherst babies born during 1945. Here they are:

CHILD	born to	PARENTS
Edward Kucinski	Mr. & Mrs.	Joseph Kucinski
Helen Wales	Mr. & Mrs.	Richard Wales
Charles Thompson III	Mr. & Mrs.	Chas. Thompson
William Allen Schoonmaker	Mr. & Mrs.	Jim Schoonmaker
Judith French	Mr. & Mrs.	Archie French
Sandy Moon	Mr. & Mrs.	Jon Moon
Elinor Ives	Mr. & Mrs.	Philip Ives
David Russell	Mr. & Mrs.	Donald Russell
Karen Brown	Mr. & Mrs.	Marshall Brown
Celia Atkins	Mr. & Mrs.	Howard Atkins

Our first 1946 baby was a daughter born to Mrs. May Bean, daughter of Nicholas Rak.

Committee of the church

February 1946

To our Servicemen:

As your regular correspondent is still loafing on the job, Ruth Atkins has again offered to write up this month's news. The temptation to stay south has kept us here in Florida longer than expected. With this introduction we will turn this over to the writer in the North where wintry snows cover the land.

Town

The annual election of officers and town meeting members was held in the different precincts on February 18. F. Civille Pray was elected as selectman for the fifth term of three years. The new town meeting members elected to our precinct are N. G. MacLeod, Doris M. Coe, J. S. Schoonmaker, F. A. Colby, and D. H. Thayer. Perhaps the article in the town warrant which is receiving the most publicity and interest is an appropriation of $34,000 asked for completion and development of the Amherst Community Playground. This amount would complete the rough grading and drainage, construct a parking area, roadway, and tennis courts; and surround the entire area with a six-foot chainlink fence with gates at Triangle and Mattoon Streets. The question comes up for vote at Town Meeting, March 4th. What the town of Cummington desired most at their town meeting was a resident doctor. One thousand dollars was appropriated and a committee was named to find one. They have had none for four years.

Arthur Warren, janitor at the Town Hall for the past 29 years, was given a party by Town Hall employees and the Police Department when he resigned recently. Mr. Pray on behalf of his associates presented Mr. Warren with a billfold containing bills and a matching keycase. Henry Messier, a returned veteran, was appointed in his place.

We are being faced with a shortage of more and more farm products. A local paper told of housewives waiting in line in Hamp for an hour and a half Friday afternoon for a half-pound of "yellow gold."

Among officers for Hampshire County Fruit Growers Association are Bill Atkins, president; Paul Wheelock, vice-president; E. R. Critchett and Ernest Markert, directors. Several Amherst farmers and wives attended the 28th annual meeting of the Eastern States Farmers Exchange held in Springfield. About 1,000 attended the two-day session. Those staying overnight had to be quartered in hotels as far away as Holyoke and Hartford when available rooms in Springfield were exhausted. This group went on record as favoring a raise in OPA ceiling prices for corn and soybeans, in order that it would be as profitable for the farmer to sell these crops as to feed them to livestock. This would furnish the farmers in the feed-deficit area of the Northeast a more equal share in these products. They are now faced with the problem of having more dairy and poultry to feed than the supply warrants.

Those travelling to the meetings struck the worst ice-storm of the winter. Springfield dumped 800 tons of sand on the city streets making them preferred walking to the icy sidewalks for the pedestrians. You can imagine how the motorists groaned trying to dodge these trudging hundreds. A week ago we had our heaviest snowfall of about a foot in 24 hours. This was followed by wind which piled the drifts high. It was such extremely heavy, wet snow that some country roads are still closed. Only heavy tractors and four-wheel drive trucks could push through the worst of it.

College

Thirty war-built federal housing units are traveling by trailer-truck from Maine to State College to help relieve the room shortage. President Hugh P. Baker said in his annual report that all out-of-state veterans and many Massachusetts students have had to be refused because of lack of housing.

The USO here recently staged a dance attended by 400 USMA and ERC students of Amherst and State colleges. The USO has recently been opened to veterans' wives during the day and held a tea for them.

Homecomings

Jon Moon has been discharged and he and his wife Marion Shumway Moon and daughter Sandy have arrived here and are settled in an upstairs apartment at Win Shumways.

Jim Towson has been working at Jack Schoonmaker's poultry plant for about two months and is developing quite an interest in his feathered friends. Several nights a week he plays the drums in a newly formed orchestra. The leader is Phil Green - he and other members of the band are returned veterans.

Two Harvey boys are home and received their discharges. We are happy to hear that both will work at their old jobs. Scott will take his place in the Amherst Savings Bank, starting March 4th. He became acquainted with Robert Emerson on his way home from Yokahama. Emerson was the first man from Amherst he had seen in his year there. Melvin, who has already been at home some time, is working at Monsanto Chemical Co. in West Springfield. Melvin is living at home with his mother who has just returned from a nursing case in Springfield.

Sherwin King, his wife and daughter Sharon, age 3, have just moved into the second floor apartment of his parent's house. The new plumbing and back door with outside stairway have just been completed.

Phil Stedman and his family have now moved from their temporary quarters at the Atkins' farm, to permanent residence in his new home on West Street. He and his wife now spend their spare time evenings in redecorating what was the former Morse place. We understand Phil has a flock of his own chickens developing but will continue to work for Bill Atkins.

John Miazga and Donald Miller have returned home after being discharged. Donald is helping his father for the present. Among his ribbons are the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Presidential Citation, Infantry Combat and Good Conduct. Wilfred Judd is another man just returned.

Dr. L. M. Ives was mentioned as discharged in last month's letter. He is in reality on terminal live. He has taken up his new duties as Chief of Neurology and Psychiatry at the U.S. Government Veterans Administration Hospital at Leeds. Dr. Sheldon Clapp is also on terminal leave and has been taking a "refresher course" in general medicine at Boston. He will reopen his practice in Amherst March 1.

We see in the papers that the S.S. Washington and Queen Mary have arrived in this country with their cargoes of the English wives and children of our servicemen, and recently another ship with Italian families of the boys has arrived. The Mayor of Springfield received a letter from two young Englishmen who wish to turn the tables and arrange correspondence for themselves and friends with American girls.

Church News

A Military Whist party is planned at the Munson Building to raise funds to help swell those already accumulated for the redecoration of the Church Sanctuary. Another project for the same purpose is the collection and sale of waste paper each Saturday. The different sections of town will be called on once in rotation every Saturday.

General

Mr. and Mrs. Mathius Berglund have a son Dennis, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Morse, now living in St. Petersburg, Florida also have a son. We rejoice with the McChesneys that they at last have a daughter and incidentally, a sister for their three boys.

South Amherst contributed 2,700 articles to the Victory Clothing Collection in which 117 pairs of footwear were included.

Munson Memorial Library, Memorial Hall below, as seen through the upstairs circular window on the north side of the So. Congregational Church. (from ***Amherst Record****, photo by Lincoln Barnes)*



Interior of Memorial Hall, which adjoins Munson Memorial Library. The structure was built on land donated by W.H. Atkins, with funds designated by Mrs. Munson from the estate of Parnell Munson. In the 1930's the scene of many dances and social functions.





Library room in Munson Memorial Library, camera facing south. (Heath, 1984)

The Dickinson Baggs Tavern, of Revolutionary War fame, more lately the Amherst Women's Club, will now be known as the Homestead Farms Camp. The new owners are Mr. and Mrs. Benton P. Cummings. We are acquainted with them through 4-H work. "This will be a new idea in summer camping; a camp based on rural life, its work, chores and enjoyments, a small camp with each camper a member of the family and rural life at its best."

In our last letter, mention was made of the campaign to raise funds to enlarge the facilities of Cooley Dickinson Hospital. A room for two patients will be given by Butler and Ullman, Inc. as a Memorial to Bernard Jackemezyk, who was in their employ before entering service. He lost his life during maneuvers in the South. His parents live in Hamp.

With our best wishes and hope to see you all at home soon,

Committee of the Congregational Church



*Early 1920 photo, from Station Road, of Holyoke Range seen through young trees of W.H. Atkins' orchard. (***Amherst Record** *files)*

South Amherst, Mass.
April 1946

To Our Servicemen,

The mean temperature for April has been much lower than that of March and it has been the driest April since 1871. Fruit buds that had advanced through March to be three weeks ahead of normal, developed very slowly because of the low temperatures of the month. A freeze the 17th did a good deal of damage but a 50 percent crop of apples is in sight.

The law was off on fishing the 15th and the fishermen were out in force. Fifteen cars were counted at one time on Depot Road, having brought fishermen to Hop Brook. The weather was cold and a good warm topcoat was not out of order. We were not able to ascertain the total result of the catch but trust there were trout enough to go around at least once.

On Easter morning about 225 people met on Pelham Hill for the Annual Easter Sunrise Service, including quite a number from South Amherst. Coffee and doughnuts were served in the town hall adjoining the church. The church building is an historical landmark of former days and there is a plan afoot to have it repaired and preserved.

The Mt. Hermon Band came down to the Church Supper last Friday night, after which they went over to the Munson Building and gave a stirring band concert to an appreciative audience.

The Judd sisters have sold their bungalow, across the street from their house, to John Vondell Jr. who is occupying it with his family, which family was increased by the birth of a second daughter this month.

The Robert Schoonmakers, Jr. have bought the former home of Lincoln Barnes in West Pelham - not far from the West Pelham Church. Mr. and Mrs. Schoonmaker are active members of the church and community and will be missed by the South Amherst friends. Our loss will be a gain for West Pelham.

Mr. and Mrs. William Davenport will take over the Mt. Pleasant Inn on North Pleasant St. This inn was formerly owned by Mr. Davenport's mother and known as Davenport Inn. Their home place has been sold to a small family by the name of Barstow - who will continue to run the business started by Mr. Davenport. We shall miss the Davenports as a family interested in the welfare of South Amherst and our best wishes go with them.

The marriage of William C. Atkins to Miss Marion Culver took place on the 20th of April at the bride's home in Williamsburg. Bill's pastor, Rev. Louis Toppan, and Marion's pastor, Rev. John Webster, officiated at the wedding. Following a dinner for the wedding party and families, Bill and Marion left for New York City on their wedding trip.

A shower was given to Nancy Stedman by Mrs. Phil Stedman in recognition of her approaching marriage to Ray Johnson of Hartford. The wedding will take place in this church on Saturday May 4th at four o'clock. South Amherst friends are invited to share in this occasion.

We hear the "married couples club" is to meet the second Saturday of the month and has been named Cossatec (Couples Second Saturday Evening Club). The co-presidents are Mr. and Mrs. Mathias Burglund, and the co-secretary/treasurers, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Schoonmaker. Since this is set up as come double or nothing, this rather limits any argument over who is to have the evening out or who is to stay at home.

Salvaged paper packing for benefit of the redecoration fund of the church takes place every Tuesday night at the Apple Storage with volunteer labor — but will be stopping soon as spring gardening takes first place in the lives of most of the volunteers.

With two exceptions all the servicemen are back who went out during the early days of the war. Those who have gone out within a year are:

William Tague	Douglas Hayes
John Harvey	Raymond Bagley
Frank Koeber	David Stedman
Kenneth Thayer	William McKeeman

Doug Hayes and David Stedman were both in the hospital the last we heard - Dave with scarlet fever. They should be up and doing by now.

The Hutchings Hostel Committee and interested parties met at the Munson building last week to arrange for its further development this season. Colored slides taken during her stay in Europe as a Red Cross worker were shown and the evening was followed by square dancing. . . .

The robbery of the safe and contents at the Pleasant Street store of the Amherst Grain Co. last week showed us how insecure our worldly goods are possessed. The culprits rolled the safe out of the front door into a truck between 9-11 o'clock one night when traffic on the street was in full swing. The safe was found next day in Northampton meadows with door open and contents gone. Perhaps this was the most exciting item of the month. Several small grass fires have occurred but no buildings burned.

So we close our fourth letter of the year 1946 with best wishes for your health and happiness.

Committee of the Home Folks



Howard Main, Merchant Marine World War II, also served in Korea. Married, he now lives at 967 S. East St. (H. Main)



Serviceman Frank "Rusty" Koeber, Jr. (Mrs. Frank Koeber)



Howard Main's ancestral house at 691 So. East St., now owned by the Starvos Foundation, was built of post and beam construction in the early 1800's. (Howard's grandfather, Joseph, a mason, bought it from its first owner. Joseph's son, Harold C. Main, a carpenter and mason, was born there in 1894; Harold's son, Howard, in 1927; then a son Jeffrey, in 1952 and he lived in the homestead until it was sold in 1962 by Mrs. Main to the W. Ashbys; next E.R. Boyden who sold it to the Starvos Foundation, a certified agency that serves people with physical handicaps). (Howard Main)



North of Norwottuck - home! Photo in 1946 of the former Critchett orchards in bloom, from the north side of the Notch. This is a scene all servicemen remembered — the 33 whose pictures we received as well as the 29 we know of with whom we had no contact. We found no complete list of those who served from the South Amherst area. We regret the lack of full representation. (Photo by Donald LaCroix, Jones Library)

Editor's note: Copies had not been made or were lost of some of the letters mailed to servicemen 1943 to April 1946. The letters used are those which showed up more than 30 years later, stored with family papers. My brother, Howard, xeroxed 25 letters and mailed copies to me. Inevitably, I was nudged into publishing them myself, a larger book this time than **Leave the Light Burning.** *The result is this companion book,* **North of Norwottuck.** *(M. Elliott, fall 1985)*



Mt. Norwottuck, taken by Sheila from the belfrey of So. Congregational Church, 1985. (Sheila Rainford)

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Maps

Map of Hockanum section, from Holyoke Range, Skinner Park leaflet, 1984.

Tercentenary Editorial Committee: *Hampshire County History*, 1971. p. 221.

Map of Amherst, 1873. Amherst, MA.

ERRATA in *Leave the Light Burning:*

Page 89	*House*	*Levi Nutting's not Truman's. Half of Truman's at King's, 143 Mechanic.*
Page 24	*House*	*Formerly Jeuett's; then Ken Thayer's.*
Page 40	*Street*	*Potwine Lane; not Middle St.*
Page 50	*"Tea"*	*Daughters-in-law; not granddaughters.*
Page 55	*Choir*	*Unidentified - Jennie Jauhola, now Mrs. Jane Colson.*
Page 57	*50 yr. members:*	*Carrie Thayer; not Grace Lowe.*
Page 62	*Family*	*Heather; not Heath Harvey.*
Page 66	*Map*	*Not "King" on corner; believe a Bolter across Mechanic; on east side.*
Page 85	*Place*	*Chas. King in front of church.*

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